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M. Dahl Pinx.
M. Tyson Gucht Sculp.
The Rt. Reverend
Dr. OFSPRING BLACKALL
late Ld. Bishop of Exeter

PRACTICAL DISCOURSES UPON THE Lord's Prayer.

BY

OFSPRING BLACKALL, D.D.
Late Lord Biſhop of *Exeter*.

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THE

THE DESIGN, *Matter*, and *Form* OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

DISCOURSE I.

The Design, Matter and Form, of the Lord's Prayer.

MATTH. vi. 9.

After this Manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

OUR Lord having in the foregoing Verses caution'd us against seeking Glory to our selves in our Addresses to God, and against ekeing out our Prayers to God

with vain Repetitions and much Speaking, as if we thought either that God was pleas'd with a Multitude of Words, or that he did not, nor could, underſtand our Needs, unleſs we were very copious and particular in declaring them; continues his Diſcourſe concerning Prayer ſtill farther in the Text and following Verſes, by preſcribing a Form of Words very proper to be uſed as a Prayer to God; and to which alſo, as to a Pattern, we ought to have Regard in all the other Prayers which we make to him. And this is what we commonly call *The Lord's Prayer. Our Father which art in Heaven*; *hallowed be thy Name*, &c.

But before I come to treat of the Prayer itſelf, I think it may be proper to premiſe ſome Things.

Here therefore I ſhall diſcourſe ſomewhat,

I. Concerning the *Occaſion* of our Lord's dictating this Prayer to his Diſciples.

II. Con-

II. Concerning the general *Deſign* of it.
III. Concerning the *Matter* of it. And,
IV. Concerning the *Frame* and *Compoſure* of it.

I. Concerning the *Occaſion* of our Lord's dictating and preſcribing this Prayer to his Diſciples.

And here we may obſerve, that this very ſame Prayer, with only ſome ſmall Variation, is recorded by two of the *Evangeliſts*, St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*; by St. *Matthew* here, and by St. *Luke* in the xi^th^ Chapter of his Goſpel, at the 2^d^ and following Verſes. And, according to the Account which theſe *Evangeliſts* give of it, it ſeems to have been dictated by our Lord upon two very different Occaſions.

For here, in St. *Matthew*, this Prayer is brought in as a Part of that one continued Diſcourſe of our Lord, called his *Sermon upon the Mount*, which takes up three whole Chapters, and ſeems to be deliver'd at once, without any Break or Interruption; and in which our *Saviour* has compriz'd the whole Sum and Subſtance

ſtance of the practical Part of the Chriſtian Religion. And what ſeems here to have given Occaſion to his preſcribing this Form or Pattern of Prayer, was the Caution which he had juſt before given his Diſciples to avoid that affected Prolixity in Prayer, which the *Heathens* were remarkable for, who ſeem to have *thought that they ſhould be heard for their much ſpeaking.* The Vanity whereof, when he had ſhewed at the 8th Verſe, by the Conſideration of the Goodneſs and Knowledge of God; *your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him*; he then, as a farther Proviſion and Security againſt that Fault, dictates to them this ſhort, but comprehenſive Prayer, as a Pattern, according to which, if they were but always careful to form their own Prayers, they would be ſure not to fall into it. For this Connexion of theſe Words with the foregoing is imply'd in the Word *therefore: be not ye like* unto the *Heathens*, who uſe *vain Repetitions* in their Prayers, and *think they ſhall be heard for their much ſpeaking:* For *your Father*

ther knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. After this Manner therefore pray ye; *Our Father which art in Heaven*, &c. *i. e.* be your Prayers ſhort, full and conciſe, as this is.

But in the xi^th^ Chapter of St. *Luke*, where we meet again with this Prayer, it is not brought in as a Part of the *Sermon upon the Mount*; (for *that*, if it be any where at all recorded by St. *Luke*, is in the vi^th^ Chapter of his Goſpel; where, indeed, we meet with many Paſſages, agreeing not only in Senſe, but in Words and Expreſſions too, with ſeveral Paſſages in this Sermon; but neither is there any Mention made there of this Prayer) nor is it any where elſe recorded by St. *Luke* as a Part of any other ſet and continued Diſcourſe of our *Saviour*. But the Occaſion of our Lord's then dictating this Prayer to his Diſciples, is at the 1^ſt^ Verſe of that xi^th^ Chapter of St *Luke*, expreſſly noted to have been this: *It came to paſs, that as he was praying in a certain Place, when he ceaſed, one of his Diſciples ſaid unto him*; *Lord teach us to pray, as*

John

John alſo taught his Diſciples. And then it follows, ℣. 2. *And he ſaid unto them; when ye pray, ſay, Our Father which art in Heaven,* &c.

Here then are two clearly different Occaſions, noted by theſe two *Evangeliſts*, of our Lord's dictating this Prayer. Once he did it of his own Motion; and the other time he did it at the Requeſt of one of his Diſciples: once he did it as he was Preaching, and, as it ſeems too, in the middle of his Sermon; and the other time he did it as he was praying, I mean, immediately after he had finiſhed his own Prayer; one of his Diſciples taking Occaſion from thence to deſire him to teach them alſo how to pray. And laſtly, once he did it at the Beginning of his Miniſtry; for 'tis here recorded by St. *Matthew*, as a Part of the firſt Sermon that he made after he had called to himſelf ſome Diſciples: and the other time he ſeems to have done it in the middle of his Miniſtry; (probably in the ſecond, or perhaps in the third, Year of his Preaching) for there are many things recorded

corded by St. *Luke*, as ſpoken and done by him before this.

So that however we can't be certain of the exact time, or times, when our Lord did dictate this Prayer, (becauſe the Order of Time is not always nicely obſerv'd by the *Evangeliſts*; for many times what one relates as done before, another relates as done afterwards;) yet thus much, at leaſt, ſeems very clear from what has been already ſaid; that this very ſame Prayer (at leaſt ſo far as 'tis the ſame in both the *Evangeliſts,)* was dictated by our Lord to his Diſciples more than once.

And from hence we may reaſonably infer, both the abſolute Perfection of this Form of Prayer, and alſo our ſtrict Obligation both to uſe the ſame as a Prayer, and alſo to compoſe whatever other Prayers we make according to this Pattern.

And this leads me to the next thing which I propounded to diſcourſe ſomewhat of, *viz.*

II. The

II. The general *Deſign* of our Lord's teaching his Diſciples this Prayer. And that ſeems to be twofold.

1. He ſeems to have deſign'd it as a *Pattern* of Prayer, according to which they ſhould compoſe their own Prayers, ſo as to avoid needleſs Prolixity; and ſo, alſo, as to preſent their Requeſts to God in the moſt grave, moſt eaſy, moſt familiar, and moſt devout Expreſſions. *After this manner pray ye*, ſays our *Saviour* in the Text: pray *after this manner*; that is, let your Prayers to God be always ſuch as this is; for Subſtance the ſame, for Compoſure like to this which I now dictate to you.

And thus our Lord's Diſciples ſeem at firſt to have underſtood him; *viz.* as only giving them a Pattern of Prayer, not as preſcribing to them the Uſe of this particular Form. But that he had a farther Deſign in it, is evident, *viz.*

2. To

2. To ſupply them alſo with a Form of Prayer ready made for their Uſe. For it was cuſtomary, it ſeems, for the *Doctors* among the *Jews* to compoſe Prayers for the Uſe of their Scholars, as well as to inſtruct them in the Act of praying. St. *John Baptiſt*, it ſeems, had done this; which made the Diſciple in St. *Luke* to deſire of our Lord, that he alſo would be pleaſed to compoſe a Form of Prayer for their Uſe; *Lord*, ſays he, *teach us to pray, as John alſo taught his Diſciples.* In Anſwer to which, therefore, our Lord there preſcribes to them, to uſe as a Prayer thoſe very Words, which he had, once at leaſt, before dictated to them as a Pattern of Prayer. *When ye pray, ſay, Our Father which art in Heaven*, &c. *i. e.* this, which I have formerly ſet before you as a Pattern, I now preſcribe to you as a Form of Prayer, both very proper to be us'd by it ſelf, and likewiſe to be added by you to your other Prayers, to ſupply the Defects thereof. Not that I mean hereby to reſtrain you

to

to this Form only, or to forbid you to put up other Prayers to God, as you ſhall have Occaſion, and as your Needs ſhall require; but what I mean, is, that you ſhould, ſometimes at leaſt, put up your Petitions to God in thoſe very Words, which, having formerly dictated to you as a Pattern, I do now again repeat to you as a good Form of Prayer. *When ye pray, ſay, Our Father which art in Heaven*, &c.

And what we may very naturally, and very ſtrongly too, infer from hence, is this; that it is *not unlawful* to pray to God by a *ſet Form*. I might infer more *viz.* that it is *ordinarily beſt* that we ſhould do ſo. This, I ſay, is what might fairly be argu'd from our *Saviour*'s ſo readily anſwering the Requeſt of his Diſciples, by teaching them a Form of Prayer, and not rather giving them ſome Check for making ſuch a Requeſt. But that it is *not unlawful* to uſe a Form of Prayer is all that I mean at preſent to contend for; and *that* moſt evidently follows from what has been ſaid. For our Lord, who knew

knew beſt what Petitions were moſt proper to be put up to God, knew alſo in what manner they were moſt proper to be offered up; and if he had known that a ſet Form of Words in Prayer was not pleaſing to God, he would not certainly have preſcrib'd any ſet Form of Prayer to be uſed by his own Diſciples: which yet is what he plainly does in that Place of St. *Luke, when ye pray, ſay, Our Father which art in Heaven,* &c.

And this alone (if there were nothing elſe to be ſaid) is abundantly ſufficient to juſtify our Church, in ordering a ſet Form of Prayer to be uſed at our publick Worſhip in the Church; and to ſhew how unreaſonable and unwarrantable the Separation of the Diſſenters from the Church is upon this Account. They will not join with us in Prayer, becauſe we uſe a Form of Prayer; becauſe we pray by a ſet Form: but would they then have join'd with the Apoſtles of our Lord himſelf, in their Prayers, if they had lived in thoſe times? No; they who now ſeparate from us upon this Account only (*i. e.* not for any

juſt Exception which they have to make againſt either the Matter or the Compoſure of our Prayers, but only becauſe we uſe a ſet Form of Prayer: they, I ſay, who ſeparate from us now only upon this Account,) muſt alſo, if they had lived in the primitive Times of Chriſtianity, have ſeparated from the Apoſtles themſelves upon the ſame Account; for they alſo uſed a ſet Form of Prayer; they prayed by a Form, as we do.

And if it be asked how I prove this? I prove it, I think, very plainly from that Paſſage in St. *Luke* before-cited, *Luke* xi. 1, 2. *One of his Diſciples ſaid unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John alſo taught his Diſciples.* The thing which this Diſciple here deſired of *Chriſt* plainly was, that he would teach them a *Form of Prayer*, for that was what *John* had done for his Diſciples. And this their Deſire he immediately comply'd with; he taught them a Prayer, as *John* had done; *he ſaid, when ye pray, ſay, Our Father*, &c.

Now, therefore, if the Apoſtles of our Lord did not afterwards uſe this Prayer,

or pray in theſe Words, as he had commanded them, they diſobeyed his Command, which I preſume our Diſſenters will not affirm; (tho', by the way, if indeed they were thus diſobedient, that would not ſerve to juſtify us in the like Diſobedience; *be ye Followers of me*, ſays St. *Paul, even as I alſo am of Chriſt.* The Example of another, even tho' it be of an Apoſtle, is no farther to be follow'd than it is agreeable to this Rule. But that the Practice of the Apoſtles in this Caſe was not according to our *Saviour*'s Direction, is not to be ſuppos'd;) and if they did obey this Command of our *Saviour*, and did ſometimes pray in theſe Words which our Lord had preſcribed to them; whenever they did ſo, they prayed by a Form. And therefore our Diſſenters, if they had lived then, muſt for this Reaſon have refuſed to join in Prayer with them; they muſt then have ſet up ſeparate Congregations, diſtinct from thoſe religious Aſſemblies which were held by the Apoſtles; they muſt have ſaid that it was

neceſſary to pray to God after a better manner than the Apoſtles did.

Judge you then, I pray, for your ſelves; but ſo judge, as conſidering that you muſt hereafter give a ſtrict Account to God the Judge of all; (judge you, I ſay,) whether that can be a good Ground of ſeparating from the Church, or making a Schiſm and Diviſion in it, which was, and if you had lived then muſt have been to you, as good a Ground of forſaking the Fellowſhip of the holy Apoſtles, as it is now of withdrawing your ſelves from the Communion of the eſtabliſh'd Church.

I know not what new Light our Diſſenters pretend to, when they declaim againſt Forms of Prayer, as dull, and formal, and unacceptable to God; but ſure I am, it is not a true Light which directs them to another way than our *Saviour* directed Men to take; for *he* (as the *Apoſtle* St. *John* tells us, *John* i. 9. he) *was the true Light which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*; and he directed Men, when they prayed, to uſe this Form of Words, to ſay, *Our Father*

which art in Heaven, &c. Are they then wiſer than the Apoſtles, who uſed a Form of Prayer? Nay, are they wiſer than our Lord himſelf (the *Wiſdom* of God the Father) who preſcribed a Form of Prayer to his Diſciples? If they are not, then a Form of Prayer is, at leaſt, lawful; and then to ſeparate from the eſtabliſh'd Church, only becauſe ſhe uſes a Form in her publick Worſhip, is a ſinful and ſchiſmatical Separation. But if they ſhould ſay, that in this reſpect they do underſtand more than the Apoſtles did, and that they know better what will pleaſe God than our *Saviour* himſelf did: and indeed ſome of them (unleſs they are grievouſly bely'd,) have not ſcrupled to ſpeak to this Effect; I mean, to ſay that this Prayer, tho' dictated by our Lord himſelf, is yet nothing near ſo good an one as are the Prayers which they make every Day: and that, tho' it might be of ſome Uſe to thoſe for whom it was made, who were then but young Diſciples of *Chriſt*, and, as themſelves own'd, wanted to be taught how to pray; yet 'tis not fit to be now

uſed as a Prayer by Perſons of ſuch exalted Underſtandings, and ſo full of the Spirit as they are. I hope the notorious Blaſphemy of ſuch Expreſſions will be a ſufficient Caution to you to give no Heed or Credit to them who utter them: for to all ſuch conceited Perſons, I'm ſure, we may truly apply theſe Words of the *Apoſtle*, *Rom.* i. 22. *Profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became Fools.*

But what is there, after all, that theſe Men do object againſt a ſet Form of Prayer? What Reaſons do they give why they may not join in it? Why, 1. They ſay, that a Form of Prayer *can't* be *ſuited* to *all Occaſions*. 2. That the Uſe of a Form is a *Stinting* of *the Spirit*. And, 3. That 'tis *contrary* to that praying *by the Spirit* which is moſt pleaſing to God.

I ſhall therefore now briefly conſider the Weight of theſe Objections againſt the Uſe of a ſet Form of Prayer; tho' indeed I think, that after what has been already ſaid to juſtify the Uſe of it from our *Saviour's* preſcribing this Form of Prayer to his Diſciples, more Words upon this Occaſion

caſion muſt be needleſs. I will not therefore uſe many.

1. Then, they ſay that a Form of Prayer can't be ſuited to all Occaſions.

Very true; but what then? Is it therefore unlawful, upon any Occaſion, to uſe a Form of Prayer that is well-ſuited to that particular Occaſion? Mayn't I, for Inſtance, in a Time of Peſtilence, uſe a Form of Prayer which is well-ſuited to a Time of Peſtilence, becauſe the ſame Form will not ſuit ſo well a Time of Famine? Or becauſe, perhaps, the Church, which provided a proper Form for one of theſe Occaſions, did not do the ſame for both of them?

Again; ſuppoſing that neither our Liturgy, nor any other Form of Prayer which is already made, is ſuited to all the Occaſions which may be hereafter; yet what does this prove? Does this prove in general the Unlawfulneſs of praying by a Form? No; all that it proves is, that that particular Form, being not ſo perfect as it

might be, is capable of Amendments and Improvements.

Nay, ſuppoſing it not poſſible that any Liturgy ſhould be ſo contrived by the Wit of Man, as to provide for all Occaſions beforehand; yet what hinders, but that when any ſuch new, and before unprovided for, Occaſion happens, a new Form of Prayer may be made which may be ſuited to that? So that, as this does not at all affect the main Queſtion, *viz.* whether it be lawful to pray by a Form; ſo neither is it any Objection againſt Liturgies, or Forms of Prayer in general: for there is no Occaſion which can ever happen, but what may be ſuited as well by a Form of Prayer to be made upon that Occaſion, as by a Prayer ſpoken *extempore*; becauſe, whatever may be ſpoken once, may be ſpoken a ſecond, or a third time; and whatever may be ſpoken, may be written down and read; and when it is ſpoken a ſecond or a third time, or when 'tis written down and read, then they call it a Form. But be it ſo; yet, if it ſuited the Occaſion the firſt time it was ſpoken,

it

it will ſuit the ſame Occaſion as well when it has been ſpoken or read an hundred times. So that this Objection againſt a Form of Prayer in general, is manifeſtly nothing but a mere Cavil.

But if what they mean by it, is only in particular, that the Prayers of the Church, now contain'd and preſcrib'd in the Liturgy, do not actually extend to all the Occaſions which we may poſſibly have. This may be granted without any Inconvenience, the Anſwer to it being very eaſy, *viz.*

That ſo neither can any Prayer that is ſpoken by any Man *extempore*, extend to all Occaſions, and expreſs all the Requeſts which every Perſon in the Congregation may have to put up to God. In this Reſpect, therefore, any Prayer which can be made is plainly as deficient as the publick Prayers of the Church are.

But the Truth is, that the Prayers of the Church are not (nor indeed are any *publick* Prayers) to be thought deficient upon this Account; eſpecially conſidering, that tho' the Church preſcribes a Form to be

be ordinarily uſed in our publick Devotions, (and which is indeed as well ſuited to all the common Occaſions of the Church, and of all the Members of it, as any publick Form can be;) yet ſhe does not thereby abridge her own Power to compoſe and enjoin occaſional Forms of Devotion upon ſpecial Emergencies. And again, tho' ſhe enjoins the Uſe of the Liturgy in the Church, and forbids any other common Prayers; (that being indeed as well ſuited to all the common Occaſions of the Church, and of all the Members of it, as 'tis fit any Office of publick Prayer ſhould be;) yet ſhe does not thereby mean to forbid her Children, when they have, any of them, any particular Sins to confeſs, any particular Bleſſings to give Thanks for, or any particular Requeſts to make known to God; to uſe any other Prayers of their own, or another's compoſing, which may be better adapted to ſuch ſpecial Occaſions than the publick Prayers are, or indeed than a publick Liturgy ſhould be. But then the proper Time and Place for ſuch

ſuch Devotions is, when we are alone and in ſecret. But,

2. Another thing objected againſt a ſet Form of Prayer, is, that 'tis a ſtinting of the Spirit.

But here it muſt be noted, that, when we ſpeak of ſet Forms, we mean only Forms of Prayer for publick Worſhip; it being before granted, that in our private Devotions every Perſon is at his Liberty to pray, either by a Form or not, as ſhall ſeem to himſelf moſt expedient.

How then, I ſay, is a publick Form of Prayer, to be uſed in the Church, a ſtinting of the Spirit? Or *whoſe* Spirit does it ſtint? The Spirit of the *Speaker*? Or the Spirit of the *Hearers*? Or the Spirit of *God*?

(1.) Does it ſtint the Spirit of the *Speaker*? That indeed muſt be granted. But then, I ſay, that there is no Harm in this; nay, I ſay more, there's a great deal of Good in it. For this was indeed the very Deſign of the Church, in compoſing and

preſcribing a Form of Prayer for the publick Worſhip, that the Spirit of thoſe who pray in publick, and who are the Mouth of the Congregation to God, might be reſtrain'd and limited: that is, that in the publick Worſhip, which ought always to be grave, ſolemn, and ſerious, the Speaker might not run out in vain Repetitions, and idle Tautologies; that he might not utter any Expreſſions which are indecent or extravagant, and more likely to excite Laughter in the Hearers, than to ſtir up true Devotion; which they who allow themſelves the Liberty of praying *extempore*, in the publick Congregation, are very apt to do. So that if this be indeed a ſtinting of the Spirit, 'tis not however a good and devout Spirit which is thereby ſtinted; for there is nothing more apt to excite and keep up true Devotion in the Minds of the Congregation, than a Prayer which is wiſely compoſed, and gravely expreſs'd; (and ſuch are the Prayers of the Church; ſuch indeed any ſtudy'd and compoſed Form of Prayer is more likely to be, than a Prayer which is utter'd

utter'd *extempore*, without Thinking or Premeditation.) So that all the Spirit which is ſtinted, by a good Form of Prayer, is only a Spirit of Folly and Vanity, of Careleſneſs and Irreverence; nay, perhaps of Faction and Blaſphemy: and I'm ſure it is not fit there ſhould ever be any ſuch Spirit in our publick Prayers and Devotions. But,

(2.) Is it then the Spirit of the *Hearers*, that is, of thoſe who are to join with the Miniſter in Prayer, which is ſtinted by his uſing of a ſet Form?

This likewiſe may be granted; but then, in Anſwer to it, it may truly be ſaid, that this is nothing more than what is, and muſt be, whether the Miniſter uſes a Form of Prayer, or whether he prays *extempore*; and whether he prays by a Form preſcribed by the Church, or by a Form of his own compoſing. The Spirit of the Hearers is as much ſtinted in one of theſe Caſes, as in another; and not more in any one of them than in any other. For in whatſoever manner the Miniſter

niſter prays, by a Form or without, the Buſineſs of the People is to join with him in *his Prayer*; they are to mind what *he* ſays, and their Heart is to go along with *his Words*; they are not, at that time, to have any Thoughts in their Minds, but ſuch as the Words which the Miniſter utters do ſuggeſt to them. And if the Spirit of the Hearers be not thus ſtinted, *i. e.* if while the Miniſter ſpeaks one thing, they take the Liberty to think of another thing, they ceaſe to pray in common; and the Liberty which they then take of thinking what they pleaſe, is in truth neither better nor worſe than wandring in Prayer, and leaving the Buſineſs which they ought to be then about. But,

(3.) Laſtly; is it then the Spirit of *God* which is ſtinted by the Uſe of a ſet Form of Prayer?

How can that be? For the Spirit of God is not given us to teach us what Words to utter in Prayer to God; thoſe the Senſe of our own Needs and Occaſi-

ons do readily enough ſupply us with; and there is no more need of an extraordinary Aſſiſtance of the Spirit to enable us to expreſs the Thoughts and Deſires of our Minds in proper Words, when we put up a Prayer to God, than there is when we put up a Petition to a Man; or indeed than there is to enable us to expreſs our Thoughts at any other Time, or upon any other Occaſion. But the Spirit of God is given us in Prayer, to excite in us pious and devout Affections towards God, and to enable us to accompany thoſe Words, which we utter in Prayer, with hearty and devout Affections. So we are taught by the *Apoſtle*, Rom. viii. 26. *Likewiſe the Spirit alſo helpeth our Infirmities; for we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it ſelf maketh Interceſſion for us, with Groanings which cannot be utter'd.* Here you ſee how the *Spirit* of God *helpeth our Infirmities*; it is not, at leaſt not ordinarily, by ſupplying us with Words; but by exciting in us devout Affections and fervent Deſires; it *maketh Interceſſion for us, with*

with Groanings which cannot be utter'd. Or if the Spirit of God be indeed aſſiſtant to any at all in the forming of their Prayers, is there not very good Reaſon to think that it is thus aſſiſting to the Guides and Paſtors of the Church, in their compoſing proper Forms of Prayer for the Uſe of the Church, as well as, or indeed much rather than, to any ſingle Man who takes upon him to utter a Prayer *extempore?* And if the publick Prayers of the Church are drawn up by the Help and Aſſiſtance of the holy Spirit, (which, I'm ſure, there is as much Reaſon to believe, as that any private Man's Prayers are ſo ſuggeſted to him;) it can be no ſtinting of the Spirit to pray to God by a Form of Prayer, which was drawn up by wiſe and good Men, with the Aſſiſtance of the holy Spirit. But,

3. It was farther objected againſt the Uſe of a ſet Form of Prayer; that to pray by a Form, is contrary to that praying *by the Spirit*, which is moſt pleaſing to God.

But

But how can that be? when (as I have juſt now ſhewn) we may pray *by the Spirit*, as well when we uſe a Form, as when we pray *extempore*; in Caſe the publick Form which we make uſe of was drawn up by the Aſſiſtance of the Spirit: which, as I ſaid, there is at leaſt as much Reaſon to believe, as that any *extempore* Prayer is ſo drawn up.

But the Truth is, they miſtake the Scripture, who think that it is our Duty to pray *by the Spirit*; for this is no where commanded or required. We are commanded indeed to worſhip God *in Spirit*; and our *Saviour* ſays, that none elſe are true Worſhippers of God, but ſuch as *worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth*, John iv. 23, 24. And we are alſo directed by the Apoſtles, to *pray in the Spirit*, and to *pray with the Spirit*; but to *pray in the Spirit*, and *with the Spirit*, is a quite different thing from praying *by the Spirit*, as that Phraſe is commonly underſtood. For what is commonly meant by *praying by the Spirit*, is, to have our Prayers, both Matter and Words, dicta-

ted and ſuggeſted to us by the holy Spirit of God; 'tis to pray by Inſpiration, as the *Prophets* and *Apoſtles* ſpake and wrote, *as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*; 'tis to pray, as the holy *Pſalmiſt* did, in thoſe *Pſalms* which we now read in the Bible, and are granted to have been of divine Inſpiration. But thus to pray to God is not laid upon us as a Duty; for it is no where in Scripture required of us, that we ſhould pray by Inſpiration: and when any Man tells you that he prays by the Spirit, if what he tells you be indeed true, *i. e.* if the Matter and Words which he utters in Prayer are really ſuggeſted to him by the holy Spirit, as he would have you believe; you ought to take every Word which ſuch a Man ſpeaks in his Prayer, not as the Words of a Man, but as the Words of God. You ought therefore carefully to write them down from his Mouth, and to give Copies thereof about to the *Chriſtian Church*. For the Spirit of God is always the ſame; and if there be any Prayer which is now dictated to any Man by the holy Spirit, that

Prayer,

Prayer, if it were written down, would be as much Scripture, and as good Scripture, as the *Pſalms* of *David*, or any other part of the *holy Bible*. For that which makes what we call *the Scripture* to be truly the Word of God, tho' ſpoken or written by Men, is becauſe it was ſpoken and written by Inſpiration of the *Holy Ghoſt*; by the ſame Reaſon therefore any other Prayer, any other Words of a Man, ſpoken by Inſpiration of the ſame Spirit, is no leſs the *Word of God* than that is.

And yet, I believe, that if they who are us'd to hear the *extempore* Effuſions of thoſe who pretend to pray by the Spirit, would take the Pains to write them down from their Mouths, and would afterwards carefully peruſe and examine them, they would eaſily be convinc'd of the Falſity of that Pretence; they would ſoon ſee the Difference between thoſe Prayers and Scripture.

But be that as it will; yet, as I ſaid before, to pray *by the Spirit*, *i.e.* to pray by Inſpiration, however it may be ſuppo-

ſed to be the *Privilege* and *Advantage* of ſome Men, that they do ſo, yet is no where commanded to any Man, as a *Duty*. All that is ever required of us, is, to pray *in the Spirit*, and to pray *with the Spirit*; and that, as I ſaid, is a quite different thing from praying *by Inſpiration*. For to pray *in the Spirit*, or *with the Spirit*, is nothing elſe but only to mind what we ſay, to give good Attention to our Prayers, and to accompany the Words of our Mouth with ſuitable Affections and Deſires of the Heart. And thus we may pray *in the Spirit*, or *with the Spirit*, as well when we pray by a *Form*, as when we pray *extempore*. Nay, I believe it is much eaſier ſo to pray *in the Spirit*, or *with the Spirit*, *i. e.* to attend to what is ſaid, and to go along with it in our Minds and Deſires, when the Miniſter prays by a Form which we have been us'd to, and are well acquainted with, than it would be if he every time us'd a new Prayer.

And that this is the true ſcriptural meaning of praying *in*, or *with the Spirit*,

rit, and that it was not thereby intended to be laid upon us as a Duty, that we ſhould pray by Inſpiration of the holy Spirit, is, I think, very evident from 1 *Cor.* xiv. 15. *What is it then? I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the Underſtanding alſo; I will ſing with the Spirit, and I will ſing with the Underſtanding alſo.* It is evident, I ſay, from hence, that we are no otherwiſe obliged to *pray with the Spirit*, than we are to *ſing with the Spirit*. If therefore we do *ſing with the Spirit*, when our Hearts go along with our Voices in ſinging any *Pſalm*, or *Hymn*, which was compoſed and written down before; (and I preſume no ſober Perſon has any other Notion of *ſinging with the Spirit*, but this;) then ſo likewiſe may we *pray*, ſo alſo we do *pray with the Spirit*, when our Hearts and Minds go along with the Words which are utter'd in Prayer, whether the Prayer be ſpoken by our ſelves, or another; and whether it be utter'd *extempore*, or be a Form which was compoſed long before.

And moſt certainly, if our *Saviour*, who has commanded us to *worſhip* God *in Spirit*, and to *pray with the Spirit*, had not known that God might be worſhipp'd and prayed to, in Spirit at leaſt, as well by a ſet Form of Prayer, as by an *extempore* Effuſion; when the Requeſt was put to him by his Diſciples, to *teach* them to *pray*; he would have taken that Occaſion to tell them, that there was no need of their ever troubling themſelves about that Matter, foraſmuch as no Prayers would be acceptable to God, but ſuch only as were immediately dictated or inſpired by the *Holy Ghoſt:* ſo that conſequently their beſt way would be never to pray at all, but only when they were moved to it by the Spirit, and then to pray *as the Spirit gave them Utterance.* He would not certainly, had he known that praying by a Form was unpleaſing to God, (he would not, I ſay, then) have preſcrib'd a Form of Prayer for them to uſe, as he did; when, in Anſwer to that their Requeſt, *he ſaid unto them, when ye pray,*

pray, ſay, Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

III. The next thing I was to ſpeak ſomewhat of, was the *Matter* of this Prayer. And concerning this, I ſhall obſerve only two things.

1. That it is a very full and comprehenſive Form of Prayer; there being no Petition which we can at any time have Occaſion to put up to God, either for our Souls, or for our Bodies; for our ſelves, or for others; which is not included in, and may not be reduced to, ſome or other of the Petitions of this ſhort Prayer.

And this is a very good Reaſon, (beſides the expreſs Command of our Lord for the Uſe of it) why we ſhould very frequently put up our Requeſts to God, in thoſe very Words which are here taught us. Becauſe tho' it may be expedient, that according as thoſe Needs are which are moſt preſſing upon us, or we are moſt ſenſible of, we ſhould be ſometimes more large and particular than we can be in the

Uſe of any general Form, ſuited, as this is, to the Condition of all Chriſtians; yet it is not fit that our Thoughts and Deſires ſhould ever be ſo wholly bent upon thoſe Subjects wherewith at preſent we are moſt affected, as to forget or overlook others, every whit as neceſſary to employ our Meditations about. And then we may be ſure that we have omitted nothing proper to be requeſted of God, when we have ſupply'd the Defects of our own imperfect Prayers by the Super-addition of this moſt excellent, and moſt comprehenſive Form of Prayer, which our Lord himſelf, who knew all our Needs, hath, in Compaſſion to our Weakneſs, taught us to make uſe of.

2. The other thing which I ſhall obſerve, concerning the Matter of this Prayer, is this; that tho' it was preſcrib'd and given by our Lord himſelf, who being the *Wiſdom* of the Father, and having *not received the Spirit by Meaſure*, had no need to copy or learn any thing from others, yet (as has been obſerved and made out

out by thoſe verſed in the *Jewiſh Learning*; [Grot. Cappel.]) there is nothing in this whole Prayer which could even then be accounted new, either in the Matter, or in the Expreſſion of it; but that it is taken, every part of it, with very ſmall Variation, out of thoſe Forms of Prayer which were cuſtomarily uſed by the *Jews* in our *Saviour*'s Time; [*Comber.*]

It appears therefore from hence, that our *Saviour* was no Affecter of Novelty in Devotion, no more than in other things. He was not one of thoſe who diſliked a good thing only becauſe it was old. He was not of the Mind of ſome later Reformers, of greater Zeal than Diſcretion, who in their haſte to root up the *Tares*, have had no regard to the *Wheat* which was mix'd with them; and in their Zeal to extirpate throughly all Superſtition, have well-nigh deſtroy'd all Face of Religion. But our *Saviour* wiſely diſtinguiſhed between good and bad; and tho' he could, doubtleſs, have taught his Diſciples a Prayer which was entirely new, yet choſe rather to take the chief Materials of his Prayer

Prayer out of the Jewiſh Devotions, then in common Uſe; that ſo it might appear, that in the other Reformations which he made in Worſhip or Religion, he was not govern'd by Fancy, or guided by a Spirit of Faction or Schiſm, but acted wholly according to the Truth and Reaſon of things.

It is therefore no juſt Objection againſt the Liturgy of our Church, (if it were true, as it is not,) that it is taken out of what they call the *Maſs-Book*; a Book in which it muſt be granted, and is readily own'd, there was a great Mixture of ſuch Devotions, as muſt be allow'd to be not only ſuperſtitious, but idolatrous. For that's not the Queſtion, what the Book was before it was reform'd, but what it is now that it is reform'd; not whether there were any Errors in it formerly, but whether there be any Errors left in it now. For if there be not, then it muſt be granted that it is well and ſufficiently reformed; and the wiſe Compilers of our now moſt excellent Liturgy, in continuing in it ſome Prayers or Collects, which had been

been indeed in Uſe in the time of Popery, but which were alſo in Uſe in the Church long before the firſt beginning of Popery; being Portions of the moſt ancient Liturgies in the firſt and pureſt Times of Chriſtianity, (in continuing, I ſay, ſome ſuch good Prayers and Collects in our preſent Liturgy, the wiſe Compilers of it) did no more than our *Saviour* himſelf did in the compoſing of his own Prayer, the whole Matter whereof was taken by him out of former Books of Devotion then in Uſe among the *Jews*. And for this we may well admire the Wiſdom, Temper, and Judgment of our firſt Reformers; but we can ſee nothing in what they did, which is in the leaſt liable to blame. And without conſidering from whence they took any of the Materials of that Liturgy which they have left to us, we may truly ſay, that it is a moſt excellent Compoſition; every whit as good as it would have been had it been entirely new, and in ſome Reſpects better.

From hence alſo it farther appears, (I mean from our *Saviour*'s taking into his own

own Prayer thoſe Words, Expreſſions, and Forms of Speech, which had been formerly in Uſe; it appears, I ſay, from hence,) that God would not be better pleas'd with our Prayers, if they were offered up every Day in a new Style and Dreſs, than he is when they are offered up in the ſame Words; provided the Matter of them be good, and the Words of our Mouth be accompanied with the fervent Deſires of our Heart. For moſt certainly, if new Phraſes and Expreſſions had been more pleaſing to God than old ones, our *Saviour* would never have preſcrib'd any Form of Prayer to his Diſciples; and much leſs would he have taken into this Form, thoſe Petitions, and thoſe Expreſſions thereof, which had been in Uſe in the *Jewiſh Church* long before.

IV. Laſtly; another thing which I propos'd to conſider in general, concerning the *Lord's Prayer*, was, the *Frame* and *Compoſure* of it. And concerning this we may obſerve, likewiſe, two things.

1. That

1. That the *Plural Number* is uſed throughout the whole Prayer. For 'tis not ſaid *my Father*, but, *our Father*; not give *me my* daily Bread, but give *us*; not forgive *me*, but forgive *us our* Treſpaſſes; and ſo on.

'Tis plain therefore, from hence, that this Prayer was deſign'd by our *Saviour*, chiefly to be uſed in Company with others, that it was meant for a publick Prayer. And from this it farther appears, that tho' our *Saviour*, at the 6th ℣. of this Chapter, (in Oppoſition to the Practice of the *Phariſees*, who, even in their ſingle Devotions, always prayed openly, that they might be ſeen of Men;) had directed his Diſciples to retire to a Cloſet, or ſome ſecret Place, where they might be ſure not to be over-look'd or over-heard by any, and there to put up their Prayers in ſecret, to their Father who ſaw in ſecret; yet did not thereby deſign to forbid publick Prayer, at proper Seaſons and Opportunities. What he meant to enjoin, was, that our private Prayers ſhould, to avoid Oſten-

Oſtentation, be as private as they could well be contriv'd; but then, that we might not miſunderſtand him, when he comes here to teach us how to pray, he puts into our Mouths ſuch Words as were moſt proper to be uſed in Company: clearly intimating thereby, that private Devotions are not to exclude the publick; but that we ought alſo, at proper Seaſons and Opportunities, to pray in Company with others.

Not but that we may, even when we are alone, uſe this Form of Prayer, and ſay, *Our Father*, &c. But then when we do ſo, the very Form of Speech which we uſe, ſhews, that tho' we are alone by our ſelves, we do extend our good Wiſhes to others beſides our ſelves. For it would be very improper for a Man to ſay, give *us our* daily Bread, and forgive *us our* Treſpaſſes, and the like, if he meant to beg theſe Bleſſings of God to and for himſelf only.

From this Form of Speech, therefore, which our *Saviour* himſelf here teaches us to uſe in our Prayers to God, *Our* Father,

ther, give *us*, forgive *us*, and the like; we plainly learn, that it is our Duty to pray *with others*, and to pray *for others*, as well as alone, and for our ſelves.

2. Another thing which may be obſerv'd in the general Frame and Compoſure of this Prayer, is this; that the three former Petitions of it regard the Honour and Glory of God; *hallowed be thy Name*; *thy Kingdom come*; and *thy Will be done*: and 'tis after this only which we are taught or allow'd to put up Petitions for our ſelves; *give us our daily Bread*; *forgive us our Treſpaſſes*; *deliver us from Evil*, &c.

And what we ſhould learn from hence, is; that it is our Duty to make the Glory of God our chief Aim and Deſign, and to deſire nothing elſe, not even for our ſelves, but in Subordination to that. According to that expreſs Direction given us by our *Saviour* at the 33[d] ℣. of this Chapter; *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of God, and his Righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you*; and that Precept of the

the *Apoſtle,* 1 Cor. x. 31. *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do; do all to the Glory of God.*

To him therefore, (1 Tim. i. 17.) *the King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, be Honour and Glory, for ever and ever.* Amen.

THE

THE PREFACE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER EXPLAINED.

DISCOURSE II.

The Preface of the Lord's Prayer explained.

MATTH. vi. 9.

After this Manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

OUR Lord having in the foregoing Verſes caution'd us againſt ſeeking Glory to our ſelves in our Addreſſes to God, and againſt ekeing out our Prayers to God

vain Repetitions, and *much ſpeaking*; as if, like the *Heathens*, we thought God could not well underſtand our Needs, unleſs we were very copious and particular in declaring them, or that he was pleas'd with a Multitude of Words; proceeds in the Text, and following Verſes, to inſtruct us farther in the Duty of Prayer, by preſcribing a Form of Words very proper to be uſed therein, which is what we commonly call *The Lord's Prayer*. *Our Father which art in Heaven*; *hallowed be thy Name*, &c.

In which there are three principal Parts; the *Preface*, the *Body* of the *Prayer*, and the *Concluſion*.

The *Preface* is a ſolemn Invocation of God, to whom we direct our Prayer. *Our Father which art in Heaven.*

The *Body* of the *Prayer* conſiſts of ſix ſeveral Petitions which we put up to him.

And the *Concluſion* contains a Doxology, or a ſolemn Recognition of the Power and Majeſty of that God to whom we have offer'd up our Requeſts; *thine is*

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the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever.

In ſerious Conſideration whereof, we are taught; in the laſt place, to add our *Amen* to the whole. By which Word we ſignify not only our full and hearty Conſent to all and every the Clauſes of the foregoing Prayer, but alſo our Faith and Hope in God, that he will beſtow upon us thoſe things which we have ask'd of him.

In ſpeaking of all which Particulars, I ſhall,

I. Explain the Meaning of each Clauſe, and ſhew what it is which we are therein and thereby taught to acknowledge to, or to beg of God; or what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words. And,

II. I ſhall mention the Duties, which, from the ſeveral Clauſes and Petitions of this Prayer, we are inſtructed in, and oblig'd to.

I. I now begin with the firſt part of the Prayer, *viz.* the *Preface*, which is, as I ſaid, a ſolemn Invocation of God, to whom we direct our Prayer. *Our Father which art in Heaven*, &c.

And here we may conſider, 1. The Object of Prayer in general, *viz.* God, called here, *Our Father in Heaven*: and, 2. What things we do, in this Compellation or Invocation of God, aſcribe to him, and profeſs and declare our Belief of.

1. The Object of Prayer in general, *viz.* God called here, *Our Father in Heaven.* To him we are to direct our religious Prayers, and to none other, as our *Saviour* himſelf teacheth us moſt expreſſly, *Mat.* iv. 10. *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.*

There is neither Precept nor Preſident for Creature-Worſhip in the whole Bible; not of the moſt glorious Angel in Heaven; much leſs of the Souls of departed Saints, ſuppos'd to be now advanc'd thither.

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On the contrary, we are expreſſly forbidden in the firſt Commandment, to *have any other God but Jehovah, i.e.* to pay divine Worſhip to any other Being; and God hath ſaid that he will, by no means, *give his Honour to another.*

And particularly, as to the Worſhip of Angels, which ſeems the moſt warrantable of any Creature-Worſhip, becauſe they are the moſt excellent of all Creatures; that is not only expreſſly forbidden by the *Apoſtle*, Coloſſ. ii. 18. but when St. *John*, in ſome Aſtoniſhment at the glorious Apparition of an Angel, and thinking him, perhaps, to be the Deity aſſuming a viſible Shape, fell down to worſhip before him; we find him twice reprov'd for it by the Angel himſelf, *Rev.* xix 10 and xxii. 9. in theſe Words, *ſee thou do it not*; *for I am thy Fellow-Servant*; *worſhip God.*

And how much the holy Apoſtles, who of all Men, who of all Creatures, next to the Angels, ſeem the moſt proper Objects of religious Worſhip, did abominate ſuch Worſhip, we learn from two Examples, and thoſe too of the two moſt eminent A-

poſtles; firſt of St. *Peter*, *Acts* x. 26. who, when *Cornelius* was fallen down at his Feet to worſhip him, *took him up, ſaying, ſtand up, I my ſelf alſo am a Man:* and then of St. *Paul*, with St. *Barnabas*, who, when the People at *Lyſtra* took them for Gods, and would thereupon have done Sacrifice to them, *rent their Cloaths, and ran in among the People, ſaying, Sirs, why do you theſe things? We alſo are Men of like Paſſions with you; and preach unto you that ye ſhould turn from theſe Vanities unto the living God, which made Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, and all things that are therein*; as you may ſee, *Acts* xiv. 15.

And yet in both theſe Caſes the Objects, *viz.* the Angel, and theſe Apoſtles, were viſibly preſent with thoſe who would have worſhipped them. It muſt therefore be worſe ſtill to give ſuch Worſhip to any Creatures not viſibly preſent, and who may, likely, not know any thing of what we are doing. For tho' the Angels are indeed in Heaven, in the Preſence of God, yet their Knowledge of things is bounded

and

and confin'd; and 'tis likely they may know nothing more of what is done upon Earth, than God is pleaſed to reveal to them. And as to the Saints departed, they as little know what we are doing, as we know where they are. *Abraham is ignorant of us, and Iſrael acknowledgeth us not*; ſo we are told, *Iſaiah* lxiii. 16. And whether, if they do know any thing of us, they are in a Condition to do any Kindneſs for us, we know not; nor indeed whither to direct our Prayers to them for that Purpoſe. For all which we know of the State of the Souls of good Men departed, is, that *they reſt from their Labours*, and that *they are in Peace*; but where their Abode is, God has not told us. All that I think we have ground from Scripture to believe concerning them, is, that tho' they are at preſent very happy, and are therefore ſaid to be in *Paradiſe*, and in *Abraham's Boſom*; they are not however, as yet, in that exalted and glorifyed State, which they will be put into after the Reſurrection, and final Judgment. Till then, therefore, (tho' indeed not

not then neither; but, I ſay, till then at leaſt;) they can't be proper Objects of Worſhip; nor (as appears from Scripture,) were they ever thought ſo by any Perſon among the *Jews* or *Chriſtians* in ancient times; unleſs we take the Parable of the *rich Man* and *Lazarus*, (*Luk.* xvi.) for a true Hiſtory. For there indeed we have one Inſtance of Prayer made to a Saint departed, even to *Father Abraham*; but then, when it ſhall be conſidered *who* it was who put up that Prayer, *viz.* the *rich Glutton*; and *where*, and in *what ſtate* he was when he put it up, even in *Hell*, or *Hades*, *tormented* in thoſe *Flames*; I preſume that Example will not be thought ſufficient to warrant *Chriſtians* upon Earth, in putting up Prayers to the Saints departed, as to a ſort of Petty-Gods in Heaven.

This then being ſettled, that God, and God only, is the Object of a religious Prayer; whom we are here taught to call *Our Father in Heaven*. Let us now conſider,

2. What

2. What things they are which, in this Compellation or Invocation of God, (compoſing the *Preface* of the *Lord's Prayer,)* we aſcribe to him, and profeſs and declare our Belief of; and they are chiefly theſe three,

(1.) The *Goodneſs* of God, and his *Readineſs* to help us, and do us Good. This we own, by calling him *Father.*

(2.) The *Univerſality* of his *Goodneſs,* that it is not limited or confin'd to our ſelves only, or to a few, but is extended to all Mankind, to whom he is a common Father; and to all whom he bears the ſame fatherly Affection which he does to us. And our Belief of this we profeſs by calling him *Our Father,* not *my Father.*

(3.) Laſtly; we likewiſe, in this Preface, declare our Belief of his *infinite Power*; that he is as *able* as he is willing to do us Good. And this we declare, by calling him

him our *heavenly* Father, or our Father which is *in Heaven*.

And our Belief of theſe three things is a juſt ground of Faith and Confidence in God, and of Aſſurance that our Prayer will be regarded by him. For,

(1.) Being permitted to call him *Father*, and thereby aſſur'd that he bears us the Tenderneſs and Compaſſion of a Father, we may be confident that he is ready and willing to grant all the reaſonable Deſires and Requeſts of thoſe to whom he is ſo related; according to that of the *Pſalmiſt*, Pſal. ciii. 13. *Like as a Father pitieth his Children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* And ſo our *Saviour* argues, *Matth.* vii. 11. *If ye, being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children; how much more ſhall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them (i.e.* to his Children,) *that ask him?* But,

(2.) If he was only a Father to ſome, and not to others of us, we might ſtill be afraid

afraid whether our own Petitions in particular would be anſwered or not; becauſe, whatever he is to others, we might doubt whether he was a Father to us or no; and there is no Man who could with good Confidence and Aſſurance ſay to him, *my Father*, if he could not alſo call him *our Father*.

But now being taught by our *Saviour* in this Prayer, which was deſign'd by him for the Uſe of every Member of his Church, to call him *Our Father*; extending, by that Expreſſion, his fatherly Relation to the whole Race of Mankind; every Perſon, warranted or commanded to uſe this Prayer, is aſſured that God is a *Father* to him in particular, becauſe he is ſo to us all.

And if he be the common Father of us all, and ſo alike related to every one of us, this gives us Aſſurance that he *is no Reſpecter of Perſons*, *but* that *in every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteouſneſs*, of what State or Condition ſoever he be in this World, *is accepted*

cepted with him, Acts x. 34, 35. But then,

(3.) Tho' he be our Father, and ſo has, we may be aſſured, a true Love and Kindneſs to us, and a good Will to help us, and to ſupply our Needs; yet he might poſſibly want Power to do us the Good which he would do. For this, we know, is the Caſe of many Fathers upon Earth; they do truly love, and moſt heartily wiſh well to their Children; and would, with all their Souls, give them Bread when they want it, and cry to them for it; but alas! they have it not to give, they themſelves being many times as indigent and impotent as their Children; and ſo all which they can do for them, is to compaſſionate thoſe their Wants, which they are not able to relieve. They have a ready Will enough to beſtow all Good upon their Children, but they want Power to do them any Good at all.

But now God, our *heavenly Father*, is as powerful as he is good; he is as rich as he is bountiful; he is as able, as he is willing

willing to help us. And this we are taught to believe, and to acknowledge our Belief of, in this Preface to the Lord's Prayer, by calling him our Father which is *in Heaven.* For being *in Heaven* he is above all; he is the ſupreme Lord and Governor of the whole World; *he doth according to his Will in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth; and none can ſtay his Hand, or ſay unto him, what doeſt thou?* Dan. iv. 35. And, *as for our God,* ſays the *Pſalmiſt, he is in Heaven; he hath done whatſoever pleaſed him,* Pſal. cxv. 3.

In a word; our God being *in Heaven, i. e.* being the great God of Heaven and Earth, he can do whatever he will; and being *a Father,* he has the Love and Tenderneſs of a Father to all his Children; and being *Our Father,* and we, conſequently, every one of us, his Children, we may reaſonably hope and expect from him all the good things which we can ever want or deſire. And more than this needs not to be believed by us, to excite in us a firm Faith, and a good Aſſurance

that all thoſe Petitions which in the following Prayer we put up to him, (which, being taught us by our *Saviour* himſelf, we are ſure are ſuch as are agreeable to the Will of God;) will be graciouſly heard and anſwered by him. And all theſe things we do own and acknowledge, in this Preface to the Lord's Prayer, when we ſay, *Our Father which art in Heaven.*

'Tis as if we had ſaid in more Words, "O good God, who, as the common "*Creator of us all*, art very kind and "gracious to all Men; who, as a *Father*, "art willing; and, as being *in Heaven* "moſt high, art able to give us all that "we want;" *hallowed be thy Name*, &c.

And ſo much for Explication of the firſt part of the Prayer, the Preface, or the Invocation.

But before I proceed farther, in the Explication of this Prayer, I ſhall (according to the Method before laid down) briefly mention the Duties, which, from this Preface to the following Petitions, we are inſtructed in, and oblig'd to.

And

And there are ſeveral Points of Duty which we may learn from hence. For,

1. If we conſider only the relative Appellation which we are here taught to give to God, by calling him *Father*; and thereby owning him to be the Author of our Being, the Giver of all good things, and very kindly affected towards us: this alone may ſerve to inſtruct us in ſeveral Duties. For,

(1.) If he be a Father to us, if he be the Author of our Being, and if it be he on whom we depend for the Supply of all our Wants; then we ought to reſpect and honour him, as a Son does his Father; giving him all poſſible Reverence, both in our Hearts and in our Actions.

For even natural Reaſon teaches us, that a Father ought to be honour'd and reſpected by his Children. And if the *Fathers of our Fleſh* do deſerve, and may claim Reverence from us, who were only the ſubordinate Means and Inſtruments of our coming into this World; much more

hath he an undoubted Title thereto, who created us out of nothing, and is the *Father* of our *Spirits*; who formed our Bodies into Shape, and breathed thereinto immortal Souls.

And thus the Prophet *Malachi*, or rather God himſelf ſpeaking by the Prophet's Mouth, does moſt ſtrongly argue, *Mal.* i. 6. *A Son honoureth his Father*, (*i. e.* he either doth ſo, or he ought to do ſo; and if he does otherwiſe, he is condemn'd by his own Reaſon and Conſcience, as deficient in a neceſſary Point of Duty: *a Son honoureth his Father,) and a Servant his Maſter*; *if I then be a Father, where is mine Honour?*

(2.) If God be our Father, on whom we depend for all we are, have, or expect; then as we ought to ſhew great Reverence to him at all times, ſo then more eſpecially when we approach his Preſence, and while we continue in his Sight, and under his Eye.

A good Son does never, either in Words or Behaviour, ſpeak or do any thing which

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is ſlighting or diſreſpectful to his Father; but when he comes before him into his Preſence, eſpecially if it be with a Deſign to beg ſome Favour at his Hands, he then, be ſure, behaves himſelf towards him with the moſt humble and lowly Carriage, and ſpeaks to him in the moſt reſpectful and ſubmiſſive manner. And if we do thus to our earthly Parents, much more ſhould we do the ſame to our heavenly Father; who tho' he is pleaſed to attribute to himſelf the ſame Relation which a Father hath to his Son, and to call us his Children, is yet infinitely more ſuperior to us, than our Fathers according to the Fleſh are. For they, tho' under God they were the Givers of our Being to us; are yet of the ſame Species with our ſelves, neither are they in their own Nature more excellent than the Children which are begotten by them; whereas his moſt excellent Nature is at an infinite Diſtance from ours: ſo that had not he himſelf encouraged us to it, it would have been the boldeſt Preſumption imaginable, in us, ſo much as to have ſtyled him our

Father. Whenever therefore we come into his Preſence, eſpecially if it be to put up any Petition to him, it highly becomes us to ſhew all poſſible Signs of the profoundeſt Reverence, and moſt lowly Submiſſion to him. And as we ſhould approach him with the deepeſt Humility of Mind, ſo ſhould we alſo uſe the moſt humble Proſtrations of Body; ſtanding bare in his Preſence, and falling low on our Knees before his Footſtool. And if we do not demean our ſelves thus towards him, our Behaviour is manifeſtly not ſuch, as the Behaviour of Children towards their Father ought to be.

For let me ask any Man, who is a Father, whether if his Son, (tho', as I ſaid before, of the ſame Nature with himſelf, and, bating the Relation, as good in all Reſpects as himſelf;) when he came to him to beg a Favour of him, ſhould before he began, or at any time while he was making his Addreſs, take a Chair, and ſit down (as we ſay) *Cheek by Joll* with him; he would not think ſuch diſreſpectful and unmannerly Carriage a juſt barr

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to his granting the thing which was requeſted of him; if not rather a juſt Provocation to the caſting him wholly out of Favour, and of forbidding him his Preſence for ever? What then can you think of thoſe (what can you think of your ſelves? if this be your own Practice; as it evidently is of too many even at the Church, in the publick Aſſemblies;) who uſe the ſame irreverent and unmannerly Poſture, when they are offering up their Petitions, nay, when they are uttering this very Prayer to God? What mean they by calling him Father, when, by their Behaviour towards him, one would think they hardly thought him ſo good as their Equal? Or if indeed they do believe his fatherly Relation, and his infinite Superiority to themſelves, how can they behave themſelves with greater Unmannerlineſs to him, while they are imploring his Mercy and Goodneſs, than they would do to any Man, tho' much their Inferior, while they were requeſting any Favour or Kindneſs from him? How can they but fear that ſuch their unmannerly and irre-

verent Behaviour ſhould provoke God, not only to deny and reject their preſent Petitions, but to forbid them from ever more appearing in his Preſence, or expecting any Favour from him?

And let it not here be ſaid, that *the Lord ſeeth not as Man ſeeth; for Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but the Lord looketh on the Heart.* For tho' this indeed be true, (for they are the Words of God himſelf, concerning himſelf, in 1 *Sam.* xvi. 7.) 'tis yet no Excuſe, much leſs is it a Reaſon for the Irreverence of our Worſhip. For what can theſe Words mean, *the Lord ſeeth not as Man ſeeth?* Can they mean, that God does not ſee ſo much as Man? No ſurely; but that he ſees a great deal more than Man does; he ſees all which Man ſees; and he ſees alſo what Men does not ſee. And ſo it follows, *for Man looketh on the outward Appearance, i. e.* he ſees that, and he ſees nothing elſe; he can but only gueſs at the Heart, by that outward Appearance which he ſees: *but God looketh on the Heart; i. e.* God looks directly into

to that; that's as plain before his Sight, as a viſible Object is before the Sight of a Man. But tho' he ſees things which are inviſible to us, it does not therefore follow, that he does not ſee the things which are viſible even to our Eyes. He therefore ſees, at leaſt as well as we do, whether a Man's Behaviour in the time of Worſhip be decent or indecent, reverent or irreverent; the Difference is, that whereas if a Man behaves himſelf decently and reverently in the Worſhip of God, we have no Reaſon but to think that he is a devout and religious Worſhipper; God, who ſees directly into his Heart, may know infallibly that he is not ſo: but if a Man's Behaviour be indecent and irreverent, even in our Sight, it is doubtleſs ſo in God's Sight too, and conſequently infinitely more offenſive to him than it is to us. For as God requires the Worſhip of the Heart, ſo he requires the Worſhip of the Body too. *O come let us worſhip, and fall down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker:* that's what God exacts from us, and what he has

Reaſon to exact; the Worſhip of our Bodies, becauſe he was the Maker of them, as well as the Worſhip of our Soul, becauſe he ſees into that. And as both Body and Soul were made by him, ſo were they likewiſe both redeem'd by him. So that to worſhip him with either the Soul only, (if that could be,) or with the Body only, (which may be, and too often is,) is either of them but giving him ſome part, but half at moſt, of the Worſhip which belongs to him, and is his due. And ſo we are taught by the *Apoſtle*, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. *Your Body ye have of God, and ye are not* (your Body more than your Soul,) *your own. For ye are bought with a Price, therefore glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are God's.*

(3.) If God be our Father, and we his Children, we ought to endeavour to reſemble him, and to be as like him as poſſibly we can.

Now he created us at firſt in his own Image, and after his own Likeneſs; but this

this Image we have foully defaced; this Likeneſs we have, in great Meaſure, worn off by Sin; rendring our ſelves thereby more like to the *Devil.* And while we continue to do the Devil's Works, ſo long we are the Devil's Children, and not God's; ſo long the Devil will own us, but God will not. *Ye are of your Father the Devil,* ſays our *Saviour* to the unbelieving *Jews*; *and the Works of your Father ye will do,* John viii. 44.

But tho' we are, by a Courſe of Sin, greatly degenerated from our firſt Stock, it is yet ſtill in our Power, thro' the Aſſiſtance of God's Grace, to be reſtor'd by Adoption, to that ſame Relation to God from which we have fallen. And this Relation we are reſtor'd to by our Regeneration in Baptiſm, at which time *the Spirit of his Son is ſent forth into our Hearts, crying, Abba, Father,* Gal. iv. 6. And this Relation will be inviolably preſerv'd, ſo long as we make it our ſincere Endeavour to conform our ſelves to his Likeneſs, to be holy and pure, juſt and merciful, as he is; and to reſemble him

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as much as we can in all his imitable Perfections.

This therefore we ought to do; or elſe we ought not, elſe we cannot in good Reaſon call him *Father*. To be truly his Children we muſt be like him; we muſt, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks, *Coloſſ.* iv. 23, 24. *be renewed in the Spirit of* our *Minds*, and *put off concerning the former Converſation the old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Luſts; and put on the new Man, which, after God, is created in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs.* And, *be ye Followers of God, as dear Children*, ſays the ſame *Apoſtle*, *Eph.* v. 1. There, from this Relation which we bear to God, he argues our Obligation to conform our ſelves to his Likeneſs. St. *Peter* alſo urges the ſame Argument to the ſame Purpoſe, 1 *Pet.* i. 14. *As obedient Children, not faſhioning your ſelves, according to the former Luſts in your Ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of Converſation: becauſe it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.* And

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from the ſame Relation our *Saviour* himſelf alſo infers the ſame Duty, *Matth.* v. 48. *Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.*

(4.) If God be our *Father*, it is then alſo our Duty (a Duty plainly reſulting from this Relation which we ſtand in towards God,) to truſt in him, and to depend upon him, as Children do in and upon their Parents. Eſpecially, when we have not only good Ground in Reaſon to believe, that, as our Father, he bears a fatherly Affection to us, ſincerely deſires our Welfare and Happineſs, and conſequently will deny us nothing neceſſary, in order to it; but have alſo the ſure Word of God, as a farther, and indeed more certain Foundation, of ſuch our Truſt and Affiance in his Goodneſs. For by that we are aſſur'd, *Pſal.* ciii. 13. *That like as a Father pitieth his Children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* And our *Saviour* himſelf, after he had given us a general Promiſe or Aſſurance of God's Readineſs to do all for us which we can reaſonably

reaſonably deſire or requeſt of him, in *Luke* xi. 9, 10. *Ask, and it ſhall be given you; ſeek, and ye ſhall find; knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that ſeeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it ſhall be opened*; proceeds then, at the 11th, 12th, and 13th Verſes, to declare the rational Ground we had for ſuch Aſſurance, even antecedently to his own Promiſe; that ſo our Belief of his Promiſe might be without any the leaſt Doubtfulneſs or Diſtruſt, in theſe Words: *If a Son ſhall ask Bread of any of you that is a Father, will he give him a Stone? Or if he ask a Fiſh, will he for a Fiſh give him a Serpent? Or if he ask an Egg, will he offer him a Scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good things unto your Children, how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit* (or, as 'tis expreſs'd in St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel, *how much more ſhall your Father which is in Heaven give good things, i. e.* all things which are good,) *to them that ask him?*

(5.) If

(5.) If God be our *Father*, then it is plainly our Duty to behave our ſelves *obediently*, as well as reſpectfully towards him, in all things. For the Name of a *Father* implies in it, not only Eminence and Superiority, but alſo Authority. A *Father* may require Obedience to his Commands, as well as Reſpect to his Perſon. *Children obey your Parents in all things*, (ſays the *Apoſtle*, Coloſſ. iii. 20.) *for this is well-pleaſing unto the Lord*; that is, it is the Will of God that ye ſhould do ſo. And again, *Eph.* vi. 1. *Children obey your Parents in the Lord, for this is right*; that is, 'tis what is juſt and reaſonable, fit and becoming; 'tis a Duty which natural Reaſon dictates, as well as which is enjoin'd by the expreſs Command of God.

But if it be reaſonable that we ſhould obey, *in all things*, the Commands of our earthly Parents; who being but Men, and of like Paſſions and Infirmities with their Children, may, thro' Ignorance or Peeviſhneſs, or only for the Exerciſe of their

their own Power, lay upon their Children ſuch Commands as are hard and rigorous; difficult to be perform'd, and which, when done, may not tend in the leaſt to promote either their Children's Good, or their own; much more is it highly reaſonable that we ſhould, not only in all things, but alſo with all Readineſs and Chearfulneſs ſet our ſelves to obey the Commands of God, our heavenly Father; who not only, as he is our Father, has full Right and Authority to lay what Commands he pleaſes upon us, and to require our Obedience thereto, (even tho' they were hard and rigorous, and ſuch as no Reaſon or Account could be given of, beſides his own Will and Pleaſure only;) but who alſo infinitely exceeds, both in Wiſdom and Goodneſs, the wiſeſt and beſt Fathers upon Earth; upon which Accounts we may be aſſur'd that he never commands any thing but what is both reaſonable for him to require, and alſo very expedient, and much for our own Good to perform. *He hath ſhewed thee, O Man,* ſays the *Prophet, what is good; and what doth the*

Lord thy God require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Micah vi. 8. Theſe are all the Commands of our kind and indulgent Father; he enjoins us nothing but what is both good in it ſelf, and for our good: and therefore if we do not obey him in theſe Commands, as we ſhall ſhew our ſelves to be none of his obedient Children, ſo neither can we reaſonably hope that he will own us as ſuch, or be any longer a loving Father to us. *If*, ſays St. *Peter*, *ye call on the Father*, *i. e.* if ye call on God as your Father, *who, without Reſpect of Perſons, judgeth according to every Man's Work; paſs the time of your ſojourning here in Fear.* For indeed, with what Face can we preſume to call him *Father*, if we reject his fatherly Authority? Or how can we hope that he ſhould love us, and deal with us as good Children, while we refuſe to give him the Obedience of Sons?

(6.) Laſtly; the ſame Relation of a *Father*, which God bears to us, makes it

it likewiſe reaſonable for us to ſubmit with Meekneſs and Patience to all his Corrections. This Duty the *Author* to the *Hebrews* infers from this Relation, *Heb.* xii. 5, &c. and he alſo enforces it with ſuch Reaſons, grounded thereupon, that nothing more ſhall need to be ſaid upon this Head, but what we read there in the Apoſtle's own Words. *My Son, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chaſtneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. If ye endure Chaſtning, God dealeth with you as with Sons; for what Son is he whom the Father chaſtneth not? But if ye be without Chaſtiſement, whereof all are Partakers, then are ye Baſtards, and not Sons. Farthermore, we have had Fathers of our Fleſh which corrected us, and we gave them Reverence; ſhall we not much rather be in Subjection to the Father of Spirits, and live? For they verily, for a few Days, chaſtned us after their own Pleaſure; but he, for our Profit; that we might be*

be Partakers of his Holineſs. Now no chaſtning, for the preſent, ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheleſs, afterward, it yeildeth the peaceable Fruit of Righteouſneſs unto them which are exerciſed thereby; *Heb.* xii. 5—11. But,

2. As God is a Father, ſo he is alſo *Our Father*. We are taught to call him ſo in this Prayer; *Our Father*; that is, a Father not to our ſelves only, but to all the reſt of our Race. And the Conſideration of this may likewiſe remind us of, and ſtrongly enforce upon us, ſundry Duties. For,

(1.) If God be a *common Father* to *us all*, then *all we* are *Brethren*. His common Relation, as a *Father*, to us, unites us in a very near Relation to one another.

And if all Men are our Brethren, we are all ſo far in a State of Equality with each other. We ought not therefore to deſpiſe, reproach, or vilify any Perſon whatſoever; becauſe how much ſoever he may be our Inferior in ſome little worldly

Reſpects, he ſtands in the ſame Relation to God that we do. We ought not therefore, I ſay, to bear our ſelves high over others, as if they were our Slaves and Vaſſals; ſeeing that, in truth, they are our Brethren, and in all conſiderable Reſpects equal to our ſelves.

Moreover, God being our common Father, and all we, as his Children, Brethren to each other; we ought all, as the *Apoſtle* exhorts, to *love as Brethren*, to *be pitiful*, and to be *courteous* to each other. For that Brethren ſhould love one another, is ſo clear a Law of Nature, and ſo deeply engraven in all our Hearts, that none can be ignorant of it. And indeed, as there was no Need of an expreſs Revelation to enjoin a Duty ſo eaſy to be diſcern'd, and ſo well known; ſo I do not remember that there is any where, either in the *Old* or *New Teſtament*, in the Law or in the Goſpel, any poſitive Precept directly commanding it. It is rather, all along ſuppos'd and taken for granted, as a Duty which could not but be known and allow'd by all; that Brethren ought to love one another. There

There is indeed mention ſometimes made in Scripture, of *brotherly Love*; but it is not, I think, any where expreſſly commanded to be exerciſed by and between thoſe who (as being born of the ſame common Parents, according to the Fleſh;) are moſt properly called *Brethren*; becauſe, as it ſeems, there was no Need of a poſitive Command to oblige us to a Duty which Nature ſo clearly dictates, and ſo ſtrongly urges upon our Practice; but the Deſign of all thoſe Texts, which require the Exerciſe, or the Continuance of *brotherly Love*, is only to propoſe that Love which Brothers do naturally bear to each other, as the Pattern and Meaſure of that Love which all Men ought to bear to one another, even altho' they are not quite ſo nearly related together, as Brothers according to the Fleſh are.

(2.) If God be *our Father*, and *all we* are Brethren; ſeeing conſequently, he bears the ſame good Will to all of us, and we have all the ſame Needs and Wants, and the ſame common Requeſts

to make to God; it hence becomes our Duty, and a very reaſonable Duty too, to join together, as we have Opportunities, in great Numbers, to offer up our common Petitions to him. This is plainly moſt glorious to God; the Multitude of his Worſhippers, owning their Dependence upon him, beſt ſets forth the Largeneſs of his Dominion, and the Extent of his Power. And this is alſo beſt for our ſelves; becauſe the greater the Number is of thoſe who join together in Prayer, the better Aſſurance may they reaſonably entertain of the good Succeſs of their Prayer. For if it may well be preſumed that a good Father will not deny the reaſonable Requeſt of any *one* of his Children, much more may it be truſted to, and depended upon, that he will not deny the like reaſonable Requeſt of *all* his Children; or of a *great many* of them, when they join together in putting up the ſame common Petition to him.

(3.) If God be *our Father*; the Father, not of one, two, or a few Men, but of the

the whole Race of Mankind; then it plainly follows, that whether we pray with others, or by our ſelves, we ought always, even in our Prayers by our ſelves, and principally for our ſelves, to be mindful alſo of others, and to beg the ſame things of God for them, which we beg for our ſelves. Indeed we can't ever, either in publick or in private, put up this moſt excellent Prayer, taught us by our Lord himſelf, without doing ſo. For by ſtyling God *our Father*, we extend his fatherly Relation to others beſides our ſelves; and by ſaying give *us our* daily Bread, and forgive *us our* Treſpaſſes, and the like, we beg the ſame things for all thoſe to whom he is a Father, which we do for our ſelves.

And that thus we ought to do, and are taught to do in this Prayer, our Church likewiſe inſtructs us, in that ſhort Explication of it which ſhe has given in her Catechiſm, when in anſwer to that Queſtion, *What deſireſt thou of God in this Prayer?* The Scholar is taught to anſwer, *I deſire my Lord God, our heavenly Fa-*

ther, who is the Giver of all Goodneſs, to ſend his Grace unto me, and to all People. But,

3. Laſtly; as God is *a Father*, and *our Father*, ſo he is likewiſe our *heavenly Father*, or *Our Father which is in Heaven*, as we are here taught to call him; by which Phraſe, *which art in Heaven*, we acknowledge (as has been already ſhewed) the Greatneſs of God's Power, and the Extent of his Dominion. And the Duties which we learn from hence are chiefly theſe two.

(1.) To rely upon his Power, who being in Heaven over all, can do what he pleaſes; to believe firmly that nothing is too hard for him, that he is able to do whatever we deſire; and conſequently to truſt that all our Petitions ſhall be granted, if they be ſuch as are fit to be granted. And,

(2.) In Conſideration of the Greatneſs of his Majeſty, to lay our ſelves low before

fore him, to approach him with the profoundeſt Reverence, to demean our ſelves in his Preſence with the deepeſt Humility both of Body and Mind, and to beſpeak him in the moſt ſubmiſſive and reſpectful Expreſſions.

This Duty I inferr'd before, from the Conſideration of his being *our Father*; but that he is alſo infinitely advanc'd above us *in Heaven*, is a farther Enforcement of it. And for this Purpoſe, the ſerious Conſideration of this Point is very well urg'd by the *wiſe Man*, Eccleſ. v. 1, 2. *Keep thy Foot, i. e.* ſhew all poſſible Reverence, of Body as well as Mind, *when thou goeſt to the Houſe of God.——Be not raſh with thy Mouth, and let not thine Heart be haſty to utter any thing before God; for God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth.*

To him therefore, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, three Perſons and one God, be given always, as is moſt due, all Honour and Glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

HALLOWED BE Thy NAME, EXPLAINED.

DISCOURSE III.

Hallowed be thy Name, explained.

MATTH. vi. 9. latter part.

——*Hallowed be thy Name.*

THE Prayer here taught by our *Saviour Chriſt* to his Diſciples, commonly called *the Lord's Prayer*, conſiſts (as I have formerly obſerved) of three principal parts; I. The Preface, which is a ſolemn Compellation or Invocation of God; *Our Father*

Father which art in Heaven: II. The Body of the Prayer, which conſiſts of ſix Petitions: and, III. The Concluſion, which contains 1. A Doxology, or ſolemn Recognition or Acknowledgment of the Power and Majeſty of that God to whom we offer up our Petitions, *for thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever:* and, 2. An Expreſſion of our hearty Concurrence and Agreement with every Clauſe of the foregoing Prayer, and of our Aſſurance of God's Power and Willingneſs to grant our Petitions, in the Word, *Amen.*

And the Method wherein I have already propos'd to treat of all theſe Particulars, is this;

I. I propounded, as I go along, to explain the Meaning of each Clauſe in this Prayer; to ſhew what it is, that therein, and thereby we are taught to acknowledge to, or to beg of God; or what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter the Words of this Prayer. And,

II. To

II. To mention the Duties, which, from the ſeveral Clauſes and Petitions of this Prayer, we are inſtructed in, and obliged to.

And in this Method I have already diſcourſed of the firſt part of this Prayer, *viz.* of the Preface; which is a ſolemn Compellation or Invocation of Almighty God, a Direction of our Speech to him, in theſe Words; *Our Father which art in Heaven.*

I proceed now in the next Place,

II. To diſcourſe of the ſecond part of this Prayer, which I call'd the Body of it; and that (as I have before obſerved) conſiſts of ſix Petitions; whereof the three firſt chiefly reſpect God's Glory, *hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come,* and *thy Will be done*; and the three laſt, our own Good; *give us this Day our daily Bread,* &c.

From which Order of theſe Petitions we may very well be reminded of that Duty which is taught us at the 33[d] ℣. of this

this Chapter, *ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God, and his Righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you*; and by the *Apoſtle*, in 1 *Cor.* x. 33. *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.*

In treating of theſe Petitions of the Lord's Prayer, I begin with the firſt of them; *hallowed be thy Name.*

And here (according to the Method before laid down,) I ſhall ſhew,

I. What Meaning we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in the Lord's Prayer; *hallowed be thy Name.* And,

II. What Duties we are inſtructed in from hence.

I. What Senſe we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in the Lord's Prayer; *hallowed be thy Name.*

And indeed this Petition ſeems to me the hardeſt to be underſtood of any in the Lord's Prayer, and the moſt like to be repeated

repeated by ſome of thoſe who uſe it, without underſtanding what they ſay; but nevertheleſs, the Meaning of it may, I ſuppoſe, in a very few Words, be made plain even to the meaneſt Capacities.

In order to which it is to be noted,

1. That the Name of God is moſt commonly, if not always, in holy Scripture, ſet to ſignify God himſelf. Thus, when 'tis ſaid in the third Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain*; the Meaning is, that we ſhould not invoke or call upon God to be a Witneſs to a Vanity, or a Falſhood; and ſo when in 1 *Kings* xviii. 24. *Elijah*, ſpeaking to the Prieſts of *Baal*, ſays, *Call ye on the Name of your Gods, and I will call on the Name of the Lord.* What he meant is plainly this, that they ſhould pray to their Gods to anſwer them by Fire, and that he would do the ſame to *Jehovah*, in order to ſatisfy the People, by the Succeſs of their Prayers, which was the true God; *the God that anſwereth by Fire, let him be God.* And ſo when

when in *Pſalm* xxi. 1. 'tis ſaid, *The Lord hear thee in the Day of Trouble, the Name of the God of Jacob defend thee*; 'tis evident that both theſe Clauſes mean the ſame thing; ſo that, *the Name of the God of Jacob defend thee*, is all one as if it had been ſaid, may the God of *Jacob* defend thee. And thus, (to name no more Inſtances of this,) in *Exod.* xxxiii. 19. when *Moſes* had deſired to ſee the Glory and Majeſty of God, that is, to ſee God himſelf; he is told by God, that it was impoſſible for him to be ſeen by mortal Eyes; but, ſays God, this I will do for thee; *I will make all my Goodneſs paſs before thee, and I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee*; *i. e.* I will declare to thee in Words, what are the glorious Excellencies and Perfections of my Nature; for ſo 'tis ſaid in *Exod.* xxxiv. 5, 6, 7. where this Promiſe was made good to *Moſes*; *the Lord deſcended in a Cloud, and ſtood with him there, and proclaimed the Name of the Lord; and the Lord paſſed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful*

merciful and gracious, long ſuffering, and abundant in Goodneſs and Truth, &c.

And this way of ſpeaking, *viz.* that by the Name of God ſhould be meant God himſelf, is not much different from our common way of ſpeaking, in which, by the mention of ſome Attribute or Property of a Man, we often mean his Perſon; or when we ſay, the *King's Majeſty*, we mean the King; tho' yet, in ſtrictneſs, the Perſon of the King, and his Dignity or Majeſty, are not the ſame; and ſo when we ſay, *his Worſhip*, *his Honour*, *his Highneſs*, *his Excellence*, or the like, what we mean by theſe Expreſſions, is, that Perſon who is worſhipful, or honourable, or high, or excellent.

When therefore we pray that God's Name may be hallowed, the Meaning is, that God himſelf may be hallowed.

But *hallowed*; what is that? What is it to hallow God, or to hallow the Name of God? This Word does not leſs need to be explained than the other.

2. Therefore 'tis to be noted, that to hallow a thing ſignifies either to make it holy by a Conſecration of it to religious Uſes, or elſe to uſe it as a holy thing after it is ſo conſecrated.

(1.) To hallow a thing, ſignifies, primarily, to ſeparate it, or to ſet it apart for ſacred Uſes. Thus we hallow a Church, when we ſolemnly appropriate any Edifice or Building to the Worſhip of God. Thus a Day is hallowed, when it is deſtin'd and appointed to the Exerciſe of Religion; and a Perſon is hallowed, when (in the Scripture Phraſe,) he is given to the Lord, as *Samuel* was, (1 *Sam.* i. 11.) *i. e.* when he is conſecrated, and ſolemnly devoted to God's Worſhip and Service.

And in this Senſe the Word is plainly uſed in the fourth Commandment, where 'tis ſaid, *in ſix Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, and reſted the ſeventh Day, wherefore the Lord bleſſed the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it*, Exod. xx. 11.

God *hallowed* it, *i. e.* for the Reaſon before mentioned; he made a Difference between that and other Days, and appointed that Day, on which he himſelf had reſted, to be kept by Men as an holy Day, in a Reſt from the common Labours of Life, and in the Exerciſes of Religion. God hallowed the ſeventh Day, by appropriating it to ſacred Uſes, and commanding Men to keep it holy.

(2.) A ſecondary Uſe of the Word, *hallow*, is to uſe as holy, a thing, which by ſuch ſolemn Conſecration or Dedication hath been ſeparated from common Uſes, and appropriated to God or Religion: and therefore, as God himſelf is ſaid to have hallowed the Sabbath Day, ſo he did likewiſe command Men to hallow it, as you may ſee in *Jer.* xvii. 22. *Hallow ye the Sabbath Day, as I commanded your Fathers.*

But the way wherein God did hallow it, and that wherein Men are to hallow it, are clearly different; God hallowed the Sabbath, when he ſet it apart, and

appropriated it to religious Uſes; when he commanded it to be kept as an holy Day to himſelf: and Men do hallow it, when they uſe it in ſuch manner as they are commanded to do, when they ſpend it in Religion, when they keep it as an holy Day ought to be kept. *If*, ſays God by the Prophet *Jeremy*, (in the 24th ℣. of the Chapter before cited,) *ye diligently hearken unto me, to bring in no Burden thro' the Gates of this City on the Sabbath Day, but hallow the Sabbath Day, to do no Work therein; then ſhall there enter into the Gates of this City Kings*, &c.

The Queſtion therefore is, in which of theſe two Senſes the Word *hallow* is uſed, in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer; *hallowed be thy Name*; whether we mean thereby to wiſh or deſire that God's Name, *i. e.* (as was ſaid before,) that God himſelf may be holy, or elſe that he may be treated as holy; and 'tis plain that it can well be underſtood in the firſt Senſe. For what is already, and can never be otherwiſe than it is, cannot be a proper Subject

of

of a Wiſh or Petition. But God himſelf is holy, his Name is holy, and his Attributes are holy, and all things relating to him are holy; God is ſo eſſentially holy, that he cannot poſſibly be prophaned or polluted by Men or Devils, ſo as to loſe any thing of his infinite and eſſential Purity; and therefore 'tis needleſs for us to pray that God may be, or that he may continue holy in himſelf, for he can't be otherwiſe; he can no more ever ceaſe to be holy, than he can ceaſe to be God. All therefore which we can mean, when we pray that the Name of God *(i. e.* that God) may be hallowed, is, that he may be uſed and treated by Men according to his Nature; that as he is really in himſelf holy, ſo he may be eſteemed and worſhipped, and reverenced by Men as ſuch.

In ſhort, when we pray that God's Name may be hallowed or ſanctified, we expreſs our hearty Deſire that God may be worſhipped, honoured, and glorified by us, and by all his Creatures, as he ought to be; that he may ever be (as indeed he deſerves to be) moſt highly eſteemed and

reſpected by us; that he may receive from us, and from all Men, the Praiſe and Glory which is due to him.

This is the meaning of this Clauſe in the Lord's Prayer, *hallowed be thy Name*, if we underſtand it as a Prayer or Petition.

But this Sentence may be underſtood, as expreſſing our Acknowledgment of what is, as well as our Deſire of what may be; we, in uſing this Form of Speech, *hallowed be thy Name*, may well be underſtood, as thereby actually giving that Praiſe and Honour to God which is his Due, and which, at the ſame time, we deſire may be given him by all others.

For thus, when in the Contemplation of any Mercy, or good thing received from God, we ſay, *God be thanked*, or *praiſed be God*, or *bleſſed be the Name of God*, or the like; tho' theſe Phraſes are expreſſed in the Form of a Wiſh or Petition, (for to ſay, let ſuch a thing be ſo, or ſo, is all one as to ſay, we wiſh or deſire that it may be ſo, or ſo;) yet what we mean by theſe Phraſes, is, to acknowledge

ledge the good thing received to be the Gift of God, and to give him Thanks for the ſame. He who ſays, thanks be to God, means, I do give him Thanks; or if he ſays, praiſed be God, he means, I do praiſe him; or if he ſays, bleſſed be the Name of God, he means, I do bleſs his Name. And ſo I ſay here; when we uſe this Sentence in the Lord's Prayer, *hallowed be thy Name*, it may as well be underſtood by us as a Thankſgiving to God for Mercies receiv'd, as a Prayer that God may be honoured and glorified by us. And when the Sentence is ſo plainly capable of theſe two Senſes, I ſee no Reaſon why we ſhould not, but rather, I think there is great Reaſon that we ſhould, have them both in our Minds; and that whenever we repeat theſe Words, we ſhould do that our ſelves, which we ſeem to deſire may be done both by our ſelves and others; that is, that we ſhould then with a grateful Heart for the Mercies which we have receiv'd from God, actually render him that Praiſe, which (as being ſenſible it is

his Due,) we pray may be given him by us, and by all Men.

When therefore we uſe this Clauſe in the Lord's Prayer, *hallowed be thy Name*, this we ſhould mean to ſay, this Senſe we ſhould have in our Minds; "We are ſenſible, O Lord, how much we are engaged to thee for all the Expreſſions of thy Bounty; for our Life it ſelf, which we owe to thee our Father, from whom we receiv'd our Being; and for all the Comforts of our Life, the Fruits of thy fatherly Care and Protection: we therefore praiſe and bleſs, and magnify thy Name for all thy Mercies; but we know we cannot praiſe thee ſo much as we ſhould do; thy glorious Name is exalted above all Bleſſing and Praiſe; we pray thee therefore to increaſe our Thankfulneſs, that we may daily praiſe thee more and more. Let our Mouth ſhew forth thy Righteouſneſs and thy Salvation all the Day, for we know not the End thereof; and mayeſt thou alſo, O God, our heavenly Father, who art the Author and Giver of all good things,

"and

" and whoſe Mercies are over all thy " Works; (mayeſt thou) be known to all " the World, how great and how good " thou art; mayeſt thou be eſteemed and " loved, praiſed and honoured, glorified " and worſhipped, by us and by all Men, " as thou oughteſt to be; we know the " higheſt Praiſes are thy Due, and we " heartily deſire they may be given thee by " all." *Hallowed be thy Name.*

And now having explained the Meaning of this Clauſe or Petition in the Lord's Prayer, and ſhewn what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds when we utter theſe Words, I proceed in the ſecond Place, (according to the Method before laid down,)

II. To ſhew what Duties we are inſtructed in, and may learn from it.

And this is certain, that we ought at all times to endeavour that our ſelves, which we pray unto God for; and if we do not, it is a certain Sign that our Deſire of what we pray for is not ſincere and hearty: for what a Man earneſtly deſires, he naturally and of Courſe ſeeks to procure all

all the ways he can. And in any Caſe whatſoever, if a Man plainly neglects the neceſſary Means of obtaining a thing, it may be certainly concluded from thence, that he is not very ſollicitous about it, that he is not much concerned whether he has it or no. When therefore we are taught to pray that God's Name may be hallowed, we are taught at the ſame time to endeavour, all that lies in our Power, to procure to God, from our ſelves and from all his Creatures, that Worſhip, Glory, and Service, which, in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, we deſire may be given him by all. And,

1. Our Care muſt begin at home; if therefore we do indeed deſire that God may be honoured by all, with the Glory which is due unto him, we ought in the firſt Place to take Care that we our ſelves be not failing and deficient in this Duty; and above all, that we do never, in Word or Deed, do any thing which is repugnant to our own Petition.

As

As a part of the Duty, therefore, which we are inſtructed in, and oblig'd to, by our Uſe of this Clauſe of the Lord's Prayer; *hallowed be thy Name*; it is,

(1.) Firſt of all our indiſpenſable Duty to be very diligent and conſtant in the Worſhip of God, by which he is moſt directly honoured by Men; and eſpecially in his publick Worſhip, by which he is more honoured than by our private Service.

We ought therefore (and if we do indeed wiſh and deſire, as we pray, that God's Name may be hallowed, we can't do otherwiſe; we ought, I ſay,) to be very frequent in Thankſgivings to God for Mercies receiv'd, and in putting up our Requeſts to him for the good things which we want; for our ſole and whole Dependence is upon him; he is indeed the Author of all that we have, and 'tis from him only that we can receive all that we ſtand in need of: and therefore we our ſelves ſhall be deficient in giving him his due Honour, which in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer we deſire may be

be given by all, unleſs, as the *Apoſtle* directs, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 17, 18. we do *pray without ceaſing, and in every thing give Thanks:* unleſs (as he directs in another Place,) we do *in every thing, by Prayer and Supplication, with Thankſgiving, let our Requeſts be made known unto God,* Phil. iv. 6.

(2.) It is another Branch of the Duty which we are inſtructed in by this Clauſe of the Lord's Prayer, to be careful to worſhip God in ſuch a manner as he ought to be worſhipped; *i. e.* as our *Saviour* directs, in *Joh.* iv. 23, 24. *in Spirit and in Truth. The Hour cometh,* ſays he, *and now is, when the true Worſhippers ſhall worſhip the Father in Spirit and in Truth; for the Father ſeeketh ſuch to worſhip him: God is a Spirit, and they that worſhip him* (*i. e.* they who would worſhip him acceptably,) *muſt worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth. i. e.* We muſt worſhip him in a manner agreeable to his Nature, and according to his own Directions; being a Spirit, we muſt worſhip

ſhip him as a Spirit, and with our Spirits; we muſt not entertain groſs Conceptions and Notions of God in our Minds, as the *Heathens* did, conceiving him to be like unto a Man, or unto any thing elſe which is viſible by corporeal Eyes, for this is to *change the Glory of the uncorruptible God into an Image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four-footed Beaſts, and creeping things,* Rom. i. 23. Neither muſt we think to pleaſe him, who is a pure Spirit, and ſees perfectly thro' us, with the Service of our Lips, without the Service of our Heart. And if we do not obſerve theſe, and ſuch other Directions as are given us in the holy Scripture, concerning God's Worſhip, our Worſhip it ſelf, by which we pretend, and would ſeem to honour him, will indeed be diſhonourable to him, the Manner of our Prayers will deſtroy the Matter of them; and we ſhall contradict our own Petitions, when we ſay, *hallowed be thy Name.*

(3.) A farther Branch of this Duty of hallowing God, or hallowing the Name of God,

God, is to ſhew a due Reſpect and Reverence to all things which are conſecrated to God, to all things which have Relation to him, to all things upon which his holy Name is called.

Thus then we are to comply with our own Deſire and Petition, that God may be hallowed or ſanctified,

1*ſt*. By giving Reverence, for his Sake, to the *Places* conſecrated to his Worſhip, according to that Precept in *Lev.* xix. 30. *Ye ſhall reverence my Sanctuary, I am the Lord.* And as a Token of our juſt Reverence to the Sanctuary, or Houſe of God, it is our Duty conſtantly to frequent the Places appointed for his publick Worſhip, and to behave our ſelves reverently therein, according to the Direction of the *wiſe Man*, Eccleſ. v. 1. *Keep thy Foot when thou goeſt to the Houſe of God.*

2*dly*. The ſame we are to do to the *Times* ſet apart for Religion; *Ye ſhall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary*; ſo 'tis commanded in the Law before

fore cited. And this we do, when we forbear (as much as may be) our ſecular Works and Employments upon the Days which are conſecrated and ſet apart for God's Service, and ſpend the ſame in Works of Piety and Charity.

3*dly*. The like Reverence and Reſpect we are likewiſe to ſhew to the *holy Word* of God, by diligent Study of the holy Scripture; by taking Delight in the Law of the Lord, and meditating therein Day and Night, (*Pſal.* i. 2.) by taking good Heed thereto, and receiving it as the Oracles of God; by readily and heartily believing all the Doctrines which it teaches, and diligently practiſing all the good Leſſons which we learn from thence.

4*thly*. And laſtly; we do honour to God, when, for his Sake, we give Honour and Reſpect to his *Miniſters*, giving Heed to their good Inſtructions, learning the Law from their Mouth, following their godly Admonitions, imitating their virtuous Examples, and eſteeming them very highly

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in Love for their Works ſake; *i. e.* upon the Account of the Relation which they have to God, as his Meſſengers and Embaſſadors, and for the Sake of thoſe good Offices which they do to Men. But,

(4.) And above all, that Branch of Duty, which our uſing this Clauſe or Petition to God, *hallowed be thy Name*, doth moſt ſtrongly enforce upon our Practice, is to be nicely careful never to do or ſpeak any thing which is diſhonourable to God. If we pray that God's Name may be hallowed, then we our ſelves, to be ſure, ought not to prophane it; by blaſpheming God; by denying any of his eſſential and glorious Attributes; by carping at, and cenſuring the Adminiſtrations of his Providence; by affirming any thing of him, or aſcribing any thing to him, which is diſhonourable, and apt to beget in the Minds, either of our ſelves or others, mean and unworthy, and diſreſpectful Thoughts of him; by invoking him as a Witneſs, either to a Falſhood or a trifling Matter; *i. e.* by falſe, raſh, or vain Swearing,

ing, or the like; for while we do by any of theſe, or the like Practices, diſhonour God in our own Perſons, we cannot uſe this Clauſe of the Lord's Prayer, and ſay, *hallowed be thy Name*, without the vileſt Hypocriſy, and ſuch as will render both our Perſons and our Prayers odious and abominable to God; becauſe our own Practice does moſt flatly contradict our Petition, which is a certain Argument that our Petition is not ſerious; for if we did deſire heartily what we pray for, it is impoſſible that we ſhould freely allow our ſelves to act or ſpeak contrary to our own Deſires. But,

2. Tho' our Care of hallowing God's Name muſt begin at home, it muſt not end there; for when we pray in the Lord's Prayer that God's Name may be hallowed, we pray that it may be hallowed not by our ſelves only, but by *all Men*; and whatever we pray for, we ought alſo our ſelves to endeavour after.

Now indeed we have not ſuch Power over other Men, as to make them ſpeak or

do as we would have them; their Tongues are their own, and their Hands are their own, and they will ſay and do with them what they pleaſe themſelves, and it is not in us to controul or reſtrain them. But nevertheleſs, tho' we can't of our ſelves, by our own Power, fully accompliſh our own Deſires in this Petition, we may contribute ſomewhat towards it; and tho' after all our Endeavours, and the utmoſt Expreſſions of our Zeal for God's Glory, it is to be feared that God will not be ſo much honoured and reſpected by all as he ought to be; he may yet, by means of our Endeavours to advance his Honour in the World, be more honoured and reſpected than otherwiſe he would be. Whether our Zeal for God will have the good Succeſs we deſire, we cannot tell, but however, the probable Hope that it will have ſome good Succeſs, is a ſufficient Encouragement to excite us to do all we can toward the fulfilling of our own Petition, that the Name of God may be hallowed; *i. e.* that God may be worſhipped and reverenc'd as he ought to be, not by ourſelves

ſelves only, but by the whole Race of Mankind, and by all other Creatures which are capable of knowing, loving, and ſerving him.

And the proper Means to procure the Glory of God, or the particular Duties, which in Compliance with our own Petition, when we ſay, *hallowed be thy Name*, we are oblig'd to, in order to procure to God that Worſhip and Reverence from other Men, which is due to him, are ſuch as theſe,

(1.) In order to this, 'tis our Duty to declare to others, upon all Occaſions, the glorious Attributes, and the wonderful Works of God; according to the Direction and Example of the holy *Pſalmiſt*, Pſal. xcvi. 3--9. *Declare his Glory among the Heathen, his Wonders among all People; for the Lord is great, and greatly to be praiſed; he is to be feared above all Gods; for all the Gods of the Nations are Idols; but the Lord made the Heavens; Honour and Majeſty are before him, Strength and Beauty are in*

his Sanctuary. Give unto the Lord, O ye Kindreds of the People, give unto the Lord Glory and Strength; give unto the Lord the Glory due unto his Name; bring an Offering, and come into his Courts: O worſhip the Lord in the Beauty of Holineſs; fear before him, all the Earth.

(2.) In Order to this, it is likewiſe our Duty to ſtand up in Defence of God and Religion, againſt a looſe, ungodly, and atheiſtical Generation of Men, by aſſerting the Righteouſneſs and Equity of his Laws, and vindicating the Juſtice and Wiſdom of his Providence.

And I believe the Practice of this Duty was never more ſeaſonable and neceſſary than in this Age in which 'tis our Lot to be caſt; for we live amongſt thoſe, who tho' baptized into the Chriſtian Faith, and profeſſing themſelves Diſciples of *Chriſt*, are yet bold enough to queſtion not only ſome of the fundamental Articles of the Chriſtian Belief, but the Foundation it ſelf, the Authority and Credi-

Credibility of all divine Revelation, and who would fain reduce the World to that State of Darkneſs and Ignorance which it was in before the preaching of Chriſtianity.

This therefore is a proper Time for us to *contend earneſtly for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*, as St. *Jude* exhorts in the 3d ℣. of his Epiſtle; there being (as he adds in the next Words,) *certain Men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this Condemnation*; *ungodly Men, turning the Grace of our God into Laſciviouſneſs, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

In Order therefore to be able to make Oppoſition to theſe Enemies of our Religion, it is our Duty to be diligent in the Reading and Study of the holy Scripture, which is *able to make us wiſe unto Salvation*; which *is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, and for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs, that the Man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good Works.*

And we ſhould do well beſides, as we have Opportunity and Ability, to ſtudy and to fix well in our Minds thoſe Precepts and Arguments whereby the Truth of Chriſtianity, and the divine Authority of the holy Scripture, have with good Succeſs been maintained and aſſerted, in all Ages, by the Champions of Chriſtianity, againſt all Oppoſers; that ſo being well rooted in Religion our ſelves, we may be the better able to convince Gainſayers; and, as the *Apoſtle* exhorts, 1 *Pet.* iii. 15. may *be ready always to give an Anſwer to every Man that asketh us a Reaſon of the Hope that is in us.*

But this is not in every Man's Power; all have not Leiſure or Parts to qualify themſelves thus to aſſert and maintain the Honour of God, and the Truth of Religion, againſt Gainſayers. I add therefore, in the third and laſt Place,

(3.) Another Means of gaining Glory to God from others, which all Perſons, even thoſe of the meaneſt Capacities, may

may and ought to uſe for this Purpoſe; and that is, the glorious Light of a good Example; by which we may at once both inſtruct others in their Duty, and make them in Love with the Beauties of Virtue and Religion; and ſo procure Glory to God by the Converſion and Salvation of Men; according to that Precept and Direction of our *Saviour*, in *Matth.* v. 16. *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they may ſee your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.*

For then God is beſt glorifyed, his Name is then moſt hallowed by Men, when they confeſs his Power, and Greatneſs, and Dominion, by ſubmitting to his Laws, and ſetting themſelves to pleaſe him in all things; according to that of our *Saviour*, John xv. 8. *Herein is my Father glorifyed, that ye bear much Fruit*; to the ſame Purpoſe is that of the *Apoſtle*, Phil. i. 11. *being filled with the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are—— unto the Glory and Praiſe of God.*

Thus have I ſhewn what it is to *hallow* the *Name of God*; what we deſire when we repeat this Petition, *hallowed be thy Name*; and in what manner we our ſelves ought to endeavour the Accompliſhment of our own Deſires.

And to the King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, be given by us and by all Men, not only with our Lips, but in our Lives, all Honour and Glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

THY KINGDOM Come, EXPLAINED.

DISCOURSE IV.

Thy Kingdom come, explained.

MATTH. vi. 10.

Thy Kingdom come; thy Will be done, in Earth as it is in Heaven.

THY *Kingdome come.* In the Lord's Prayer, as I have already obſerved, there are three principal Parts; the Preface, or Invocation; the Body of the Prayer; and the Concluſion.

And the Body of the Prayer conſiſts of ſix Petitions; the three firſt of which reſpect chiefly God's Glory, and the three laſt our own Good.

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The three firſt, which reſpect chiefly God's Glory, are theſe, *hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come,* and *thy Will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven.*

Of the firſt of which I diſcourſed the laſt time; I proceed now to the ſecond, *thy Kingdom come.*

In ſpeaking of which I ſhall obſerve the ſame Method as before; that is,

I. I ſhall explain the Meaning of it, or ſhew what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to God; what it is which we deſire of God when we ſay, *thy Kingdom come.* And,

II. I ſhall ſhew what Duties we may learn, and are inſtructed in, by our Uſe of this Petition.

I. I ſhall explain the Meaning of it, or ſhew what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to God; what it is which we deſire of God when we ſay, *thy Kingdom come.*

Now the Kingdom of God may be underſtood generally, or ſpecially. Underſtanding it generally, by the Kingdom of God, is meant that ſovereign Power and Dominion, which he, as the great Creator of all things, hath over all his Creatures; upholding all things by the Word of his Power, and directing and ordering, by his wiſe Providence, all the Affairs of the World, according to his own Pleaſure; as 'tis ſaid, *Pſal.* ciii. 19. *The Lord hath prepared his Throne in the Heavens, and his Kingdom ruleth over all.*

But, underſtanding the Phraſe thus, it cannot be a proper Subject of Petition to God, to pray that his Kingdom may come, becauſe it is come already; for *he doth now according to his Will in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can ſtay his Hand, or ſay unto him, what doeſt thou?* as 'tis ſaid, *Dan.* iv. 35. And this Kingdom of God is not lately begun, but was from all Eternity, and it will continue for ever; for as 'tis ſaid in the *V.* juſt before, *his Dominion is an everlaſting Dominion, and*

and his Kingdom is from Generation to Generation, Pſal. cxlv. 13. And the *Pſalmiſt*, ſpeaking of this Kingdom of God, whereby with undoubted Right, and an infinite and uncontroulable Power, he governs and diſpoſes all things according to his own Will, ſays, that *the Lord is King for ever and ever*, Pſal. x. 16. and that *the Lord ſhall reign for ever*, Pſal. cxlvi. 10. For this Kingdom of God being founded in his own infinite and eternal Perfections, as it never had beginning, ſo it never can have an end; neither is it capable of any Increaſe or Diminution.

To pray therefore that this Kingdom of God may come, would not be good Senſe, for 'tis abſurd to wiſh that a thing may be, which is already, and can never be otherwiſe than it is.

Beſides, our very putting up our Petitions to him, as God, ſuppoſes that he is the Sovereign Lord of all; ſo that if this were the Senſe of this Petition, the Ground of our Petition, and the Matter of it would be inconſiſtent; for if we pray that the Kingdom of God (taking it in this Senſe,)

may

may come, we ſeem to ſuppoſe that it is not come already; *i. e.* that he is not as yet ſo great a King as we wiſh he may be; and yet, by the very putting up this, or indeed any other Requeſt to him, as God, we muſt be ſuppoſed to believe that he is God; *i. e.* that he is already the Sovereign Lord of the whole World, of infinite Fulneſs, Power and Perfection, able to grant us whatever we deſire of him.

And laſtly, when we put up this Prayer to God, called the Lord's Prayer, it is a thing which not only we muſt be ſuppos'd to believe, that his Kingdom is come, but which we alſo expreſſly own and profeſs our Belief of, both in the Preface of the Prayer, and in the Concluſion of it; in the Preface, when we ſtyle him, our Father *which is in Heaven*; and in the Concluſion, when we ſay, *for thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever.* It is plain therefore that——

The coming, or the Exiſtence of God's Kingdom, taken in this Senſe, is not a proper Subject of Petition, but rather of Rejoicing and Gratulation, and Thankſgiving;

ving; according to thoſe Paſſages which we meet with in the *Pſalms*. *The Lord reigneth; let the Earth rejoice; let the Multitude of the Iſles be glad thereof*, *Pſal.* xcvii. 1. And again, *O come let us ſing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful Noiſe to the Rock of our Salvation; let us come before his Preſence with Thankſgiving, and make a joiful Noiſe unto him with Pſalms; for the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all Gods*, *Pſal.* xcv. 1, 2, 3. And again, *The Lord is great, and greatly to be praiſed; he is to be feared above all Gods*, Pſal. xcvi. 4. *I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all Gods. Whatſoever the Lord pleaſed, that did he, in Heaven and Earth, in the Seas, and all deep Places*, Pſal. cxxxv. 5, 6.

This Kingdom of God therefore being already come, or rather, having always been, and being what will be for ever; we are ſtill to ſeek, what that Kingdom of God is which we pray may come, and which conſequently we muſt ſuppoſe to be not come already, or at leaſt not to be yet

yet ſettled and eſtabliſhed in that Fullneſs and Perfection which we hope it will have.

And I obſerved before, that the Kingdom of God is ſometimes taken ſpecially; *i. e.* not for that Power and Sovereignty which he by Right has over all, but for that free and voluntary Subjection which ought to be paid him by us, and all his other Creatures which he hath endued with Reaſon, and a Capacity to acknowledge his Sovereignty and Dominion.

And this Kingdom of God is twofold; his Kingdom of Grace, and his Kingdom of Glory: the coming of both which we may well enough be underſtood to mean, when we put up this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, and ſay, *thy Kingdom come.*

1. By the Kingdom of God, in Scripture, is oftentimes meant his Kingdom of Grace; or the Profeſſion of the true Religion, and the Goſpel of *Chriſt*, and a Practice correſpondent thereto; or, in other Words, by the Kingdom of God is meant the State of the Goſpel, that Kingdom which God exerciſes peculiarly in his Church, inſtruct-

ing it by his Word, guiding and governing it by his Spirit, and preſerving and protecting it by his Power and Providence; which is therefore by *Divines* called God's *Kingdom of Grace*, becauſe it is founded, not in God's abſolute Power, but in a Covenant of Grace conſented to by both Parties, by which the Subjects of this Kingdom engage to take him for their God, and he engages to take them for his People; and which is therefore call'd a Covenant of Grace, partly becauſe it it mere Grace and Favour in God, that he is pleas'd to make any Engagement or Promiſe to Men; and partly, becauſe the Conditions of this Covenant, on God's part, are very gracious, they are more advantagious to us than we could reaſonably expect or deſire: and becauſe alſo the Conditions thereof on our Part are likewiſe very gracious, they are much eaſier and gentler than God might have required of us; and therefore the *Apoſtle*, ſpeaking of *Chriſtians*, the ſpecial Subjects of this ſpiritual Kingdom of God, ſays, *Rom* vi. 14. *Ye are not under the Law*, (which required ſtrict and unſinning

unſinning Obedience,) *but under Grace*; *i.e.* under ſuch a Covenant as is gracious, and exacts leſs from you than God might have done, and makes Allowances for humane Weakneſs, and diſpenſes Pardon to repenting Sinners; and therefore St. *John* ſays, *Ch.* i. ℣. 17. *The Law was given by Moſes, but Grace and Truth came by Jeſus Chriſt.*

And by the Kingdom of God, when it is taken in this Senſe, may be meant either his external or his internal Kingdom. Or indeed I do not ſee why we may not at the ſame time underſtand both of them, when there is no Reaſon to reſtrain it only to one, as I think there is not in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer.

(1.) The external Kingdom of God is the outward Profeſſion of the true Religion; in which Senſe the State of the *Jews*, to whom the Law was given by *Moſes*, and who for a time were the peculiar People of God, might then not improperly be called the Kingdom of God; the reſt of the World being then overſpread with

Darkneſs and Ignorance, and ſerving Devils inſtead of God.

But now ſince the Abolition of that Law, and the Revelation of the Goſpel, the Chriſtian Religion, or the Preaching and Profeſſion of the Goſpel, is the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven; for both theſe Phraſes are uſed in Scripture promiſcuouſly: in this Senſe this Phraſe is uſed by St. *John Baptiſt*, Matth. iii. 2. *In thoſe Days came John the Baptiſt, preaching in the Wilderneſs of Judea, and ſaying, Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand. The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand*; *i. e.* the Kingdom or Reign of the *Meſſiah* is now approaching; that Kingdom which God will exerciſe among Men, by the Preaching and Mediation of his Son. And thus likewiſe our *Saviour* uſes the Phraſe, in *Matth.* xxi. 43. where, having reproved the Incredulity of the *Jews*, for not receiving the Goſpel which he preached, (under the Parable of an Houſholder, who ſent his Servants one after another, and laſt of all his Son, to the Husbandmen, to whom he had let out his Vineyard,

Vineyard, to receive the Fruits thereof, and they, as faſt as they came, perſecuted and ſlew them, not ſparing even the Son himſelf;) our *Saviour* there threatens them, that as a Puniſhment of their baſe and barbarous Uſage of the ſeveral Meſſengers which God had ſent unto them; *the Kingdom of God ſhould be taken from them. Therefore, I ſay unto you, the Kingdom of God ſhall be taken from you, and ſhall be given to a Nation bringing forth the Fruits thereof. The Kingdom of God ſhall be taken from you*; *i. e.* ſince you have been ſo unfruitful under the Means of Grace, you ſhall now enjoy them no longer; God hath hitherto had his viſible Church among you; *he hath ſhewed his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and his Judgments unto Iſrael; he hath not dealt ſo with any Nation, and as for his Judgments they have not known them*, Pſal. cxlvii. 19. But now he will remove his Kingdom, *i. e.* his viſible Church, elſewhere; he will *call thoſe his People that were not his People, and thoſe beloved that were not beloved*; and you who

were once his choſen and peculiar People he will reject and caſt off. This is plainly our *Saviour*'s Meaning in that Paſſage, *the Kingdom of God ſhall be taken from you, and ſhall be given to another Nation:* 'tis as if he had ſaid, You ſhall no longer enjoy the Profeſſion of the true Religion, as you have hitherto done; but he will make known his Will and his Law to other People, who have been hitherto ignorant of him, and eſtabliſh his Church among them.

Now if by the Kingdom of God, here in the Lord's Prayer, we underſtand this external Kingdom, or the viſible Church of *Chriſt*, then our Meaning in this Petition, when we pray that God's Kingdom may come, is this; we deſire of God that he would be pleaſed to enlarge the Bounds of his Church, that he would cauſe his Goſpel to be preached, and the glorious Light thereof to ſhine among all Nations; we pray that all the dark Corners of the World may ſee the Salvation of God, that all *the Kingdoms of this World* may *become the Kingdoms of our Lord*, (Rev. ii. 15.) and

of

of his *Chriſt*; and that all the People of the World, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, may be united in one Sheep-fold, under one Shepherd, the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*. But,

(2.) By the Kingdom of God, when we mean thereby the Kingdom of Grace, we may underſtand the internal and ſpiritual Kingdom of *Chriſt*; *i. e.* when *Chriſt* does not only rule in the World, by Mens outwardly profeſſing his Religion, and calling themſelves the Subjects of his Kingdom; but when he alſo reigns and rules in their Hearts; when all who confeſs his Name do ſincerely give up themſelves to obey his Laws, and do heartily endeavour to live as becomes the Goſpel of *Chriſt*; when they are his Subjects, not only in Shew and Profeſſion, but in Deed and in Truth; when they are *Chriſtians* in Heart, as well as in Name, and ſincerely practiſe the Religion which they profeſs.

And in this Senſe our *Saviour* himſelf uſes, or rather interprets this Phraſe, *the Kingdom of God*; (*Luke* xvii. 20, 21.) when being demanded by the *Phariſees*

when the Kingdom of God ſhould come? (which they underſtood in a carnal Senſe, meaning, by the Kingdom of God, a temporal Kingdom upon Earth, which they thought God did intend in a ſhort time to eſtabliſh; making the *Jews*, under their King the *Meſſiah*, the Head of an univerſal Monarchy;) he anſwered them, and ſaid, *the Kingdom of God cometh not with Obſervation; neither ſhall they ſay, lo here, or lo there; for behold the Kingdom of God is within you*; *i. e.* that is truly the Kingdom of God, when God reigns and rules in the Hearts of Men, and they do inwardly, and from the Heart, yield themſelves ſincerely obedient to him. And the ſame thing is plainly meant by the Kingdom of God, *Rom.* xiv. 17. *The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteouſneſs and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt.*

Now if by the Kingdom of God, here in the Lord's Prayer, which we deſire may come, we underſtand this internal and ſpiritual Kingdom of *Chriſt*, whereby he rules in the Hearts of Men, ſubduing their

their Wills to the Obedience of Faith; then what we deſire of God, when we utter the Words of this Petition, is this; that he would be pleaſed to grant ſuch a Meaſure of his Grace to all Men, and eſpecially to all thoſe who do profeſs his true Religion, that they may all live anſwerably to their Profeſſion; that all who are Members of the viſible Church or Kingdom of *Chriſt*, may be likewiſe Members of his ſpiritual Kingdom, may entirely ſubmit themſelves to him in all things, and obey from the Heart all the Laws of his holy Inſtitution: or, in the Words ſometime uſed in our Liturgy, that the *whole Church* of *Chriſt may be ſo guided and governed by* his *good Spirt, that all who profeſs and call themſelves Chriſtians, may be led into the way of Truth, and hold the Faith in Unity of Spirit, in the Bond of Peace, and in Righteouſneſs of Life.*

Thus we are to pray for the coming of God's Kingdom of Grace; *i.e.* that all the World may be brought both to the Profeſſion and Practice of the true Religion; that the

the Goſpel of *Chriſt* may be preached to the whole World; and that all who hear it may heartily receive and embrace it, and lead their Lives according to it; that they may all be, both in Profeſſion and in Truth, the Diſciples of *Chriſt*. But,

2. As God hath a Kingdom of Grace, ſo he hath likewiſe a Kingdom of Glory; and tho' the former be (as I ſuppoſe) what was principally meant in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, wherein we pray that his Kingdom may come; yet I ſee no Reaſon why we may not underſtand the Words in ſo large a Senſe as to comprehend this other too.

Now God's Kingdom of Glory is at the end of the World, when he ſhall come in Judgment to reward the Obedience of his faithful Servants; and *in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on them that knew not God, and obeyed not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; when all the Kingdoms of the World ſhall *become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt*, and he ſhall reign for ever; as 'tis ſaid in *Rev.* xi. 15.

xi. 15. Nay, when the *Son alſo himſelf ſhall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father*, and *ſhall be ſubject unto him that before did put all things under him, that God may be all in all*; as 'tis ſaid, 1 *Cor.* xv. 24, 28.

But now taking the Kingdom of God, in this Senſe, for his Kingdom of Glory; when we pray for the coming of this Kingdom of God, we cannot put up the Petition in this Senſe, abſolutely, but in Subordination to the other Senſe of it. For to pray abſolutely that God would put an end to this State of things, that he would cut the Years of this World ſhort, and haſten the Day of his Vengeance, is in Effect to pray for the Deſtruction of Sinners; and ſuch a Petition as this, cannot be put up to God without Breach of Charity towards Men, whoſe Salvation we ought to deſire, and conſequently ſhould be glad of God's Long-ſuffering towards them, which we hope will bring them to Repentance. And therefore we are firſt to pray for the coming of God's Kingdom of Grace, and then for the coming of his

Kingdom

Kingdom of Glory; we are firſt to pray that the Goſpel may be preached to, and heartily receiv'd by all; and then, when the Number of the Elect is filled up, we may pray that his Kingdom of Glory may alſo come; that is, that bleſſed time, when they who are dead in the Lord ſhall receive the Reward of their Labours; when the Promiſes of God ſhall be made good to all his faithful Servants; when they who ſuffered for him here, ſhall reign with him in his eternal Glory; when the Glory of his Majeſty, and the Wiſdom of his Providence, and the Riches of his Love, and the Exactneſs of his Juſtice, ſhall be made manifeſt to all the World; when the Devil ſhall be for ever bound in the infernal Lake, and Sin, and Death, and all our ſpiritual Enemies, ſhall be perfectly ſubdued, and utterly deſtroyed; when we ſhall be made Kings and Prieſts unto God, and live for ever with him in the happy Regions of unſpeakable Felicity. And this is what we ought to pray for, and earneſtly to deſire; for 'tis given as part of the Character of a good Chriſtian,

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in the holy Scripture, that he *waits for the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. i. 7. that he *looks for the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt from Heaven*, Phil. iii. 20. that he *loves his appearing*, 2 Tim. iv. 8. that he *looks for the bleſſed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, Tit. ii. 13.

In ſhort then; when we uſe this Paſſage in the Lord's Prayer, *thy Kingdom come*, this is the Senſe which we ought to have in our Minds: "May'ſt thou, O God, "who art indeed the King over all the "World, may'ſt thou be owned as King "by all; may all Mankind profeſs Sub- "jection to thee; and may thy Grace ſo "rule in the Hearts of all, that they may "be entirely ſubject to thee, and ſincere- "ly obey thee; and then may that bleſ- "ſed time alſo haſten, when all who have "here owned thee for their King, ſhall "reign for ever with thee in thy everlaſt- "ing Glory." *Thy Kingdom come.*

And now having ſufficiently explained this Petition, and ſhewn what Senſe we ought

ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to God; I proceed, (according to the Method before laid down,)

II. To ſhew what Duties we may learn, and be inſtructed in, and are oblig'd to, by our Uſe of this Petition; *thy Kingdom come*; and they are chiefly theſe which follow.

1. As we pray that God's Kingdom may come, *i. e.* that the Bounds of the *Chriſtian* Church may be enlarged; we ought by all the ways we can, to endeavour the Accompliſhment of our own Petition; for he who prays for that which he will be at no Pains to compaſs, may well be preſumed not to deſire what he prays for.

In Compliance therefore with our own Petition, when we ſay, *thy Kingdom come*, we ought to uſe all the Means which are in our Power, to increaſe and propagate the Chriſtian Faith, and to make Proſelytes to it.

It was therefore a Duty ſpecially incumbent on the *Apoſtles* and immediate Diſciples of our Lord, to whom the Uſe of this Prayer was firſt commanded, to be faithful and diligent in the Execution of that Commiſſion which was given them by our Lord, juſt before his Aſcenſion, to *go into all the World, and to preach the Goſpel to every Creature*, Mark xvi. 15. and to *diſciple all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever he had commanded them*, Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. And,

'Tis ſtill, in order to the ſame End, the Duty of all Miniſters of the Goſpel, according to the Direction given by St. *Paul* to *Timothy*, to *preach the Word*, to be *inſtant in Seaſon and out of Seaſon*, to *reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all Long-ſuffering and Doctrine*, 2 Tim. iv. 2.

And laſtly, it was always, and ever will be the Duty of all *Chriſtians*, in order to enlarge this Kingdom of God and of *Chriſt*, to let their *Light ſo ſhine before Men, that others ſeeing their good Works, may glorify*

glorify their Father which is in Heaven, according to the Direction of our *Saviour*, in *Matth.* v. 16.

'Tis indeed a thing utterly inconſiſtent with Sincerity, in putting up this Petition to God, *that his Kingdom may come*, for any of us, who make this a part of our Prayer, to allow our ſelves in any ſcandalous Practices, whereby the Minds of thoſe who are Aliens to our holy Religion may be juſtly prejudiced againſt it, whereby the Enemies of God may be made to blaſpheme, and by Reaſon whereof our excellent Religion will be in Danger to be evil ſpoken of among the Heathens.

And on the other ſide, it is our indiſpenſable Duty to endeavour to recommend our moſt holy Profeſſion to the Judgment and Eſteem of Mankind, by a Converſation becoming the Goſpel of *Chriſt*, by a blameleſs and an exemplary Life; and by this Argument, Perſons of all Orders and Degrees are frequently in holy Scripture exhorted to great Strictneſs and Regularity in their Behaviour. The *aged Women* are to *be in Behaviour as becometh*

eth Holineſs, —— *that they may teach the younger Women to be ſober, to love their Husbands, to love their Children; to be diſcreet, chaſte, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own Husbands;* and all this to the End *that the Word of God be not blaſphemed,* Tit. ii. 3, &c. Nay, even *Servants* (Perſons of the meaneſt Rank, whoſe Converſation may be thought to be leaſt regarded, whoſe Miſbehaviour may be thought the leaſt ſcandalous; even *Servants,* I ſay,) are to behave themſelves orderly and honeſtly in their Stations, to *count their own Maſters worthy of all Honour,* and that to this End, *that the Name of God and his Doctrine be not blaſphemed,* 1 Tim. vi. 1. they are to be *obedient unto their own Maſters, and to pleaſe them well in all things; not anſwering again, not purloining, but ſhewing all good Fidelity;* and that to this Purpoſe, *that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things,* Tit. ii. 9, &c. And 'tis the Duty of all *Chriſtians* whatſoever, as we are taught by St. *Peter,* 1 Epiſt. iii. 15, 16.

to *ſanctify the Lord God in their Hearts*, —and to *keep a good Conſcience*; that *they that ſpeak Evil of* them as *Evil-Doers, may be aſhamed*, when it ſhall appear that they do *falſely accuſe their good Converſation in Chriſt:* 'tis the Duty of all *Chriſtians*, to *have* their *Converſation honeſt among the Gentiles*, that even thoſe who *ſpeak againſt them as Evil-Doers, may, by their good Works which they ſhall behold, glorify God*; as we are taught by the ſame *Apoſtle*, in the ſecond Chapter of that *Epiſtle*, at the 12th ℣.

It was this, I mean the holy and blameleſs, and exemplary Lives of the Apoſtles, and firſt Converts to Chriſtianity, which was in great Meaſure the Cauſe of its ſpreading ſo faſt as it did at firſt; and without this, all the Zeal of the *Apoſtles* in preaching the Goſpel, and all the Miracles whereby their Preaching and Teſtimony was confirmed would have avail'd but little.

For Men may be zealous in a bad Cauſe as well as in a good one; for thus the *Phariſees* did *compaſs Sea and Land to make one Proſelyte*, only to make him *two-fold more*

the Child of Hell than themſelves; as our *Saviour* obſerves, *Matth.* xxiii. 15. And Miracles may be, and have been wrought for the Confirmation of a falſe Worſhip, as is intimated both by *Moſes*, *Deut.* xiii. 1,2. and by our *Saviour*, *Matth.* xxiv. 24. So that whether any Religion be from God, cannot be certainly known by the Zeal of Men to promote it, or by the ſeeming Wonders which are wrought to confirm the Truth of it: but if the Cauſe which Men are zealous for, be apparently good, and the Doctrine for the Confirmation whereof Miracles are wrought, be ſuch as plainly tends to purify Men's Hearts, and to reform their Lives; and if it be evident that all who embrace it are render'd better Men by it; there can then be no reaſonable Suſpicion of any worldly Deſign in the Promoters of ſuch a Religion, or of any diabolical Illuſion in the working of ſuch Miracles: but as the Miracles do bear Witneſs to the Truth of the Doctrine, ſo the Purity of the Religion does no leſs bear Witneſs to the Truth of the Miracles; and both together are ſuch an

Atteſtation to the Truth and Divinity of the Religion, as cannot reaſonably be excepted againſt.

And by the ſame Means by which this Kingdom of God in his Church was at firſt ſet up, by the ſame (ſo far as they are in our Power,) muſt it be upheld and maintain'd; I ſay, ſo far as they are in our Power; and therefore it having ſeemed good to the divine Wiſdom, after that the *Chriſtian* Religion had been once well proved by Miracles, and the Hiſtory thereof had been once publiſhed, and generally receiv'd in the World, to withdraw the extraordinary Power of Miracles, as being no longer needful; the only Means whereby we can now contribute towards the upholding and eſtabliſhing this Kingdom of God in the World, is by Zeal in maintaining the Truth of our Religion, againſt vain Diſputers; and eſpecially by a remarkable Strictneſs and Sanctity of Life. And this moſt certainly will be an effectual Means to make our Religion be ſpread and propagated in the World, if by the Holineſs and Exemplarineſs of our Lives, we can make it appear

that the Religion which we profeſs is more excellent than any other. Thus, as we pray that the Kingdom of God may come, *i. e.* that his true Worſhip and Religion may be propagated in the World, and that all Nations of the Earth may come into the Boſom of the Church, we are to endeavour the ſame by *ſhining as Lights in the World*; and by proving to all, the Excellency of our holy Religion, by the Purity and Excellency of our own Lives, led exactly according to the ſtrict and perfect Precepts thereof. But,

2. As we pray that God's Kingdom may come, *viz.* that Kingdom of God which is within us; *i. e.* that God may rule in the Hearts of all thoſe who do confeſs him with their Mouths; it is our Duty, and what in Compliance and Conformity to our own Petition we ought to do, to give him our own Hearts, to yield our ſelves, without any Reſerve, to believe whatever he has revealed, and to do whatſoever he has enjoined.

For the chief Enemies to this Kingdom of God within us, and which hinder it from being eſtabliſhed; I ſay, the chief Enemies to this Kingdom of God are likewiſe within us; they are the naughty Deſires and Inclinations of our own Hearts; the *natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God,* ——— *becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*; the *carnal Mind,* is *Enmity againſt God, for it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.* Theſe Enemies, therefore, of God's Kingdom, it is our part to fight againſt, thereby to promote, as much as in us lies, the Accompliſhment of our own Petition. And 'tis not enough for us, in this Caſe, to pray that God's Kingdom may come, to implore his Grace to ſanctify us, and redeem us from our Sins and Corruptions; but we muſt work together with it, and ſet our ſelves as ſtrenuouſly to mortify all our carnal Affections, and corrupt Inclinations, as if we had no Help but from our ſelves: and then thus praying, and thus endeavouring, thus procuring by our Prayer God's Grace to work in

in us, and thus working our ſelves together with the divine Grace, both our Endeavours will be ſucceſsful, and our Prayers alſo availing, and the Kingdom of God will come; it will be ſet up and eſtabliſhed within our Hearts: for, as the *Apoſtle* ſays, 2 *Cor.* x. 4, 5. *The Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal, but mighty thro' God, to the pulling down of Strong-holds, caſting down Imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Chriſt.*

3. Laſtly; when we ſay *thy Kingdom come*, we mean thereby not only God's Kingdom of Grace, but likewiſe his Kingdom of Glory; we pray not only that the Bounds of his Church may be enlarged, that he may have the *Heathen for his Inheritance*, and the *utmoſt Parts of the Earth for his Poſſeſſion*, and that he may reign and rule in the Hearts of all thoſe who profeſs Subjection to him; but we pray likewiſe, (as 'tis expreſs'd in one of

the Collects of our Church, appointed to be uſed at the Burial of the Dead; we pray, I ſay,) that having *accompliſhed the Number of his Elect, he would alſo haſten his Kingdom; that* ſo *we, with all thoſe that are departed in the true Faith of his holy Name, may have our perfect Conſummation and Bliſs, both in Body and Soul, in his eternal and everlaſting Glory.*

And when we pray that God's Kingdom of Glory may come, the Duty which the Petition, taken in this Senſe, inſtructs us in, and enforces upon our Practice, is to be diligent in preparing our ſelves for this Kingdom of God; that ſo, when our Lord comes to take upon him this Kingdom, we may be provided to receive him, and in a fit Condition to enter with him into it. *Seeing that ye look for ſuch things,* (ſaith St. *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* iii. 14. when he had been ſpeaking of the coming of this *great Day* of God, *wherein the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great Noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat; the Earth alſo, and the Works*

that

that are therein, ſhall be burnt up, and *we, according to his Promiſe, look for a new Heaven and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteouſneſs, ſeeing*, ſays he, *that ye look for ſuch things*; and I think it may be ſaid much rather, *ſeeing that ye pray for ſuch things*, and are endeavouring by your own Petitions to haſten the coming of this great Day of God;) *be diligent, that when he comes, ye may be found of him in Peace, without Spot, and blameleſs.* They who live here without any Senſe of Religion, may plead, when that Day ſhall come upon them, that they were ſurprized by a Judgment which they looked not for; but we who pray, every Day, that God's Kingdom may come, ſhall not be able ſo much as to pretend that we were not aware of its coming; and ſo ſhall be of all others the moſt inexcuſable, if we are not prepared for it.

Let then our *Loins be always girded about*, and our *Lights always burning*, and we *our ſelves like unto Men that wait for their Lord, that when he cometh and knocketh*, we *may open unto him immediately*,

ately, Luke xiii. 35, &c. This is the good Leſſon we are reminded of, every time we repeat this Petition; and *bleſſed are thoſe Servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find watching*, ℣. 37.

If we are always in this Poſture, we may ſay this part of our Lord's Prayer with true Devotion, and with an earneſt Longing and Deſire of the Accompliſhment of our own Wiſhes; and then, when we ſee this Day a coming, we may *lift up* our *Heads with Joy, knowing that* our *Redemption draweth nigh*, Luke xxi. 28. But to them who live in Wickedneſs and Uncleanneſs, or in Riot and Exceſs, beating their Fellow-Servants, and eating and drinking with the Drunken; the Day of the Lord, without their wiſhing, will come too ſoon; *the Lord* of ſuch Servants *will come in a Day when* they *look not for him, and in an Hour that* they *are not aware of, and will cut* them *aſunder, and appoint* them their *Portion with Hypocrites; there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth*, Matth. xxiv. 50. And to ſuch as theſe, who live without a true

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and ſerious Senſe of God and Religion, and yet, for Form and Cuſtom-ſake, pray with the Church, and ſay every Day, *thy Kingdom come*, the Prophet *Amos* gives a very juſt and ſeaſonable Reproof; *Amos* v. 18, *&c. Wo unto you that deſire the Day of the Lord; to what End is it for you? The Day of the Lord is Darkneſs, and not Light; as if a Man did flee from a Lyon, and a Bear met him; or went into the Houſe, and leaned his Hand on the Wall, and a Serpent bit him. Shall not the Day of the Lord be Darkneſs, and not Light? Even very dark, and no Brightneſs in it?* I conclude all therefore with theſe Words of the *Apoſtle*, Rom. xiii. 12, *&c. The Night is far ſpent, the Day is at Hand*, (that great Day of the Lord, when we muſt give an Account of all our Works, it is at hand, it is very near approaching;) *let us therefore caſt off the Works of Darkneſs, and let us put on the Armour of Light. Let us walk honeſtly, as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenneſs, not in Chambering*

bering and Wantonneſs, not in Striſe and Envying; but put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make not Proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfil the Luſts thereof.

THY

THY

WILL be done, *&c.*

EXPLAINED.

DISCOURSE V.

Thy Will be done, &c. explained.

MATTH. vi. 10.

——*Thy Will be done, in Earth as it is in Heaven.*

THE Prayer taught here by our *Saviour* to his Diſciples, conſiſts (as I have formerly noted) of three principal Parts; I. A Preface, containing a ſolemn Invocation of Almighty God, *Our Father which art in Heaven:* II. The Body of the Prayer, conſiſting of ſix diſtinct Petitions: and III. The Concluſion of it; containing, 1. A Doxology, or ſolemn Recognition

of the Greatneſs and Majeſty of God, *thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever*; and, 2. A Profeſſion of our hearty Aſſent to every Clauſe of the foregoing Prayer, and of our Faith and Truſt in God, in the Word, *Amen.*

And the firſt part of this Prayer, *viz.* the Preface, containing (as I ſaid,) a ſolemn Invocation of Almighty God, whom we are taught to call, *Our Father which is in Heaven*, I have formerly diſcourſed of; ſhewing the Meaning thereof, and what Duties it inſtructs us in, and obliges us to.

I have likewiſe already entred upon the ſecond Part, *viz.* the Body of the Prayer, conſiſting (as I told you,) of ſix ſeveral Petitions, three of them chiefly regarding God's Glory, and the other three of them chiefly reſpecting our own Good.

And the two firſt of theſe, *hallowed be thy Name*, and *thy Kingdom come*, I have likewiſe already diſcourſed of. In ſpeaking of both which, I have ſhewed you, firſt, what we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to God;

God; and ſecondly, what Duties we may learn, and are inſtructed in, by our Uſe of theſe Petitions.

I proceed now to diſcourſe of the third Petition, in the ſame Method; *thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.*

I. Then, I am to declare the Meaning of theſe Words, or to ſhew what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds, when we repeat this Clauſe or Petition of the Lord's Prayer; *thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.*

Now the *Will* of God is two-fold; the *Will* of his *Counſel* or *Providence*, and the *Will* of his *Precepts* or *Commands*; both which we pray, in this Petition, may be done.

1. By that *Will* of God, which we pray may be done, we may underſtand the *Will* of his *Counſel* or *Providence*; *i. e.* that *Will* of God, by which he orders and diſpoſes every thing in the World, as it pleaſes him, *working all things according to the Counſel of his own Will*, Eph. i. 11.

And thus, whatever falls out in the World is the Will of God, and there is no Event which comes to paſs, no Accident which happens, but what is agreeable to God's Will, and is brought to paſs by the Ordering and Diſpoſition, by the Operation or Permiſſion of his Providence; for *he doth according to his Will in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can ſtay his Hand, or ſay unto him, what doeſt thou?* as 'tis ſaid, *Dan.* iv. 30. And *whatſoever the Lord pleaſed, that did he in Heaven, and in Earth, and in the Seas, and in all deep Places*, ſays the *Pſalmiſt*, Pſal. cxxxv. 6.

But now, if it be ſo, that God does always order every thing according to his own Pleaſure; if, as the *wiſe Man* ſays, *Prov.* xix. 21. *Whatever Devices there are in the Heart of Man, the Counſel of the Lord, that ſhall ſtand.* If, whatever Oppoſition be made to him, he will yet bring to paſs whatever he purpoſes, what need we then make this the Subject of our Petition? We need not ſurely pray for that, which will certainly be whether we pray

pray for it or no; if therefore what God wills be always done, what need we pray that *his Will may be done? For who hath reſiſted his Will*, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks? *Rom.* ix. 19. And, *the Lord of Hoſts hath purpoſed*, ſaith the Prophet, *and who ſhall diſannul it? And his Hand is ſtretched out, and who ſhall turn it back?* Iſaiah xiv. 27.

I anſwer; if we underſtand this by *the Will of God*, in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, *viz.* the Execution of his Purpoſe and Counſel, then when we pray, that his Will may be done, we do not mean that it may be done by himſelf, but that it may be done us; *i. e.* we do not pray that God may do what *he* pleaſes, but that what pleaſes God, and what he does according to his own Pleaſure, may pleaſe us too. When we pray that God's Will may be done, (meaning thereby the Will of his Counſel, or Providence;) our Wiſh and Deſire is, that we our ſelves, and all Men may perfectly acquieſce in, and be fully ſatisfyed with whatſoever God ſhall pleaſe to order for us; for then we do this

Will of God, when we patiently ſuffer it, and in all the Accidents which befall us, whether they be pleaſing or ungrateful, proſperous or adverſe, can heartily join in that Saying of good old *Eli*, 1 Sam. iii. 18. *It is the Lord; let him do what ſeemeth him good.*

Or elſe, taking *the Will of God* ſtill in this Senſe, for the *Will* of his *Counſel* or *Providence*; I think this Clauſe in the Lord's Prayer, *thy Will be done*, may be yet better underſtood, as an *Act* of *Submiſſion* and *Reſignation* to the Will of God, rather, I ſay, than as a Wiſh or Petition. Thus the Phraſe is uſed in *Acts* xxi. 14. where, after the *Chriſtians* who were with St. *Paul* had in vain endeavour'd to perſuade him not to go up to *Jeruſalem*, becauſe that *there* (as it had been foretold by *Agabus,) Bonds and Afflictions did abide him*, it is ſaid by St. *Luke*, and *when he would not be perſuaded, we ceaſed, ſaying, the Will of the Lord be done*; *i. e.* "If it muſt be ſo, if it be the Will of "God that thou ſhould'ſt go up to *Jeru-* "*ſalem*, and ſuffer there thoſe things

which

" have been foretold, *ſo be it, we are*
" *contented, we ſubmit to this Will of*
" *God, we acquieſce in his good Plea-*
" *ſure, we are ſatisfyed that it ſhould*
" *be as it pleaſes him.*" And in the ſame Senſe our *Saviour* himſelf uſed this very ſame Phraſe, in Prayer to God, when he was in his Agony in the Garden, the Evening before his Crucifixion, *Matth.* xxvi. 42. *He prayed, ſaying, O my Father, if this Cup may not paſs away from me, except I drink it, thy Will be done*; *i. e.* I ſubmit; I am content to do it; I reſign my ſelf wholly to thy Pleaſure, to ſuffer whatever thou ſhalt think fit to lay upon me. For that this was our *Saviour*'s Meaning in thoſe Words, *thy Will be done*, appears plainly from the 39th ℣. of that Chapter, where the ſame Prayer of our Lord is thus related; *O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me*; *nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt*; where theſe laſt Words, *nevertheleſs not as I will, but as thou wilt*, are manifeſtly an *Act*, or an *Expreſſion* of his *Reſignation* of himſelf to God's Will and Pleaſure, and is thus

expreſſed by St. *Luke*, *Nevertheleſs not my Will, but thine be done*, Luke xxii. 42.

When therefore we ſay the ſame Words in the Lord's Prayer, *thy Will be done*, it is very proper for us at all times, but then eſpecially when we are under any Affliction, or have a Proſpect of ſome ſore Evil like to befall us, to uſe them in the ſame Senſe in which our Lord then did; *i. e.* to compoſe our ſelves thereby to a patient Suffering of the Will of God, to mean them as an Act of Reſignation of our ſelves to his good Pleaſure. But,

2. There is another Branch of God's Will, which I called before the Will of his Precepts or Commands; that is, that Will of his which he has declared to us, which he has given us as a Rule to walk by; for what God has enjoin'd us, that is his *Will* we ſhould do. Thus our *Saviour* ſays of himſelf, *Joh.* vi. 38. *Him that cometh to me I will in no wiſe caſt out; for I came down from Heaven, not to do my own Will, but the Will of him that ſent me; and this is the Father's Will*

Will which hath ſent me, that of all which he hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing. And *this* (we are told by the *Apoſtle,*) *is the Will of God, even our Sanctification*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 3. And 'tis *this Will of God* which I take to be chiefly meant in this Petition, and which we pray may be done.

And underſtanding the *Will* of God, in this Senſe, there are two things which we pray for in this Petition, both in the Behalf our ſelves, and in the Behalf of others.

(1.) We pray that God would be pleaſed *to make known his Will* to us and to all Men, that we may not be *unwiſe, but underſtanding what the Will of the Lord is*, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks, *Eph.* v. 17. That we may *prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect Will of God*, as 'tis ſaid, *Rom.* xii. 2. Becauſe unleſs we know what the Will of God is, and what things he would have us do, we ſhall not know how to ſet our ſelves to the Performance thereof.

(2.) We pray alſo, that having made known his Laws to us, he would be pleaſed to give us his Grace obediently to keep the ſame; for then this Will of God is done by us, when we do what he commands us; when we obey all his Precepts, and when we order all our Converſation aright, and according to the Rules and Directions which he has preſcribed. And therefore, that we our ſelves, and all other Men, may always do thus, is what we are to be underſtood to mean, when we pray that *his Will may be done in Earth.*

But it follows in the Prayer, *as it is in Heaven*; *thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven*; *i. e.* May thy Will be done and performed by us Men, who live now here upon the Earth, as it is by thy holy Angels which are in Heaven; of whom the holy *Pſalmiſt* ſays, *Pſal.* ciii. 20, 21. that *they do his Commands, hearkning unto the Voice of his Word,* and that *they are the Miniſters of God, that do his Pleaſure.*

But

But there are ſome ſpecial Conditions, or Qualifications, of the Obedience of the holy Angels to the Will of God, which help to render it more grateful to him, and better accepted by him, than otherwiſe it would be: theſe therefore we pray, in this Petition, may be imitated by Men on Earth, in their doing the Will of God, when we pray that his Will may be done in Earth, *as it is in Heaven.*

And this I take to be the Meaning of the Word *as*; *as it is in Heaven.* This *as* denotes a *Likeneſs* only, not an *Equality*; for we can't be ſuppos'd to pray that the Will of God may be done as perfectly by Men as it is by Angels; that the Obedience of Men, in this mortal and ſinful State, ſhould be as ſpotleſs and untainted as that of the holy Spirits in Heaven is: for ſuch Obedience as they yield to the Will of God, is ſo much beyond what we are able to yield, while we are here in the Body; that we can hardly pray with Faith, that ours may be exactly ſuch, that it may be in no Reſpect inferior to theirs: but ours may be as good as it can be in this frail

frail and degenerate State; our Obedience may be *like* theirs, tho' not *equal* to it; ours may be, tho' not *so perfect*, yet *so qualified* and *conditioned* as theirs is; and that such, it may be, we desire of God in this Petition. Particularly,

1*st*. As in Heaven there are *no rebellious Spirits* mixt with the holy Angels, (for *the Angels which kept not their first Estate, have also left their own Habitation, and are reserved in everlasting Chains, under Darkness, unto the Judgment of the great Day*, as St. *Jude* tells us, in the 6th ℣. of his Epistle; so that there are now none in Heaven, who gainsay or oppose the divine Pleasure;) so we pray that it may be on Earth; *i. e.* that the *whole Race of Men* may be a willing and obedient People: that all Vice and Wickedness may be abolished, and rooted out of the Earth; that those Days may come which have been foretold long ago by the Prophets, when *they shall not teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying, know the Lord, for all shall*

ſhall know me, from the leaſt unto the greateſt, Jer. xxxi. 34. *For the Earth ſhall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea*, Iſaiah xi. 9.

2*dly*. Whatever the holy Angels do, in Obedience to the Commands of God, they do it *with a good Will*; they not only do what they are commanded, but they are pleaſed with the Command; they obey cheerfully, and from the Heart, without any Reluctancy, without any Spice of Unwillingneſs, or the leaſt Degree of Averſion to the Buſineſs they are employ'd about: they not only do the Will of God, but they delight to do it; they undertake their Work, not as a Task, but as a Pleaſure: and therefore that we, and all the Inhabitants of the Earth may do ſo too, is another thing which we deſire of God in this Petition.

3*dly*. As a Fruit of this Heartineſs in their Obedience, whatever they are commanded they *undertake* readily; they need not be often urged, or frequently called upon

upon to do this Work; but the leaſt Intimation of God's Pleaſure preſently ſets them to it. That we therefore may do ſo too, that we may obey readily, and without Delay take in Hand the Work which God has given us to do, is another thing which we beg of God in this Petition.

4thly. As they readily undertake, ſo they likewiſe *ſpeedily execute* whatever they are commanded; they are the winged Meſſengers of God, and when they are ſent they run; when they are bid to go, they fly; they ſet about their Work ſo quickly, and diſpatch it ſo nimbly, that the Space of Time between God's giving his Command, and their executing it, is hardly perceptible. Thus when *Cornelius* prayed, and an Angel was ſent unto him by God, to tell him that his Prayers were heard, and his Alms accepted, and to order him to ſend for St. *Peter* to be inſtructed by him in the Chriſtian Religion; all this was done, the Meſſage was both ſent from God, and delivered to him by the Angel,

Angel, before he had ended his Prayer; as you may ſee, *Acts* x. 30. That we therefore may ſo *run the Way of God's Commandments*, and with the like Speed and Diligence finiſh the Work which is given us to do, is what we farther deſire of God in this Petition, when we ſay, *thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.*

5thly, And laſtly; as the Obedience of the holy Angels is hearty and chearful, prompt and ſpeedy, ſo it is likewiſe univerſal. They never decline any Work which they are ſet to; whatever it is that they are forbidden to do, it is all alike to them; they make no Difference, but as readily undertake one thing as another; they have no Will of their own, diſtinct from, and much leſs oppoſite to, the Will of God; but what God wills, they will too; and immediately ſet themſelves to execute his Commands.

Thus is God's Will done in Heaven by the holy Angels, and thus we pray that it may be done in Earth by our ſelves, and by all Men, when we uſe this Paſſage of the

the Lord's Prayer. So that the full Senſe of this Petition, (underſtanding by the Will of God, both *the Will of his Providence*, and *the Will of his Precepts*;) and the Meaning which we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words, is this; "*Righteous art thou, O Lord,* "*and upright are all thy Judgments, and* "*the Teſtimonies that thou haſt command-*"*ed are alſo righteous, and very faithful*; "may we, therefore, and all Men, always "meekly ſubmit our ſelves to thy Diſpoſal; "may we always be well content and ſa-"tisfyed with that Lot and Portion which "thou aſſigneſt to us; and whatever Com-"mands thou art at any time pleaſed to "lay upon us, may they univerſally be "ſubmitted to, by all; and grant that we "may perform them, with ſuch Hearti-"neſs and good Will, with ſuch Readineſs "and Cheerfulneſs, with ſuch Speed and "Impartiality, as the holy Angels in Hea-"ven do."

And now, having explain'd the Meaning of this Petition, I proceed, as I propos'd in the ſecond Place,

II. To

II. To ſhew what good Leſſons we are taught, what Duties we are inſtructed in, and engag'd to, by our Uſe of this Petition, *thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.* And,

1. Taking the Will of God, in the firſt Senſe, for the Will of his Counſel or Providence; the Duty we are inſtructed in, and reminded of by our Uſe of this Petition, is to ſubmit our ſelves entirely to God's Will; to be contented with our Lot; to like well that Place and Station which the Providence of God aſſigns us; and to be eaſy and patient under all the Calamities and Afflictions which befall us in this Life; whatſoever pleaſes God, ſhould pleaſe us too; and we ſhould always reſt ſatisfyed, that what he orders for us is beſt. And we contradict our ſelves, and act inconſiſtently with our own Petition, if, while we pray that God's Will may be done, we fret and murmur at any of the Diſpenſations of his Providence towards us, or cavil at, and find Fault with, his ordering

ordering and Adminiſtration of things; for he *worketh all things according to the Counſel of his own Will*, as the *Apoſtle* ſays; and what is according to God's Will, is likewiſe according to our own Deſire; for we pray that *his Will may be done*; what Reaſon then can we have to complain, when things fall out according to our own Wiſhes? And unleſs the Event of things, which is always according to the Will of God, be likewiſe pleaſing to us, we are guilty of foul Diſſimulation and Hypocriſy with God, when we pray that *his Will may be done.*

And there is Reaſon good, that we ſhou'd be of this quiet, compoſed, and contented Spirit; there is ſufficient Reaſon implied even in the Petition it ſelf, to oblige us to be always thus eaſy and ſatisfyed with the divine Adminiſtrations; for the Will which we deſire may be done, or which we declare our Acquieſcence in, is *God*'s; *thy Will be done.*

And he is a Being of infinite Wiſdom; he knows before-hand what will be the Iſſue and Event of all his Adminiſtrations; and

and he underſtands exactly what is beſt for the World, and for every particular Man in it; and is able ſo to contrive and order things, that what ſeems evil and adverſe, ſhall work for good at the laſt: whereas on the contrary, we underſtand very little of the Nature and Tendency of things, or indeed even of our own Tempers and Conſtitutions. We neither know what is beſt in it ſelf, nor what is beſt for us; we oftentimes wiſh for our ſelves thoſe things, which if we had them would be our Ruin; and are ſometimes ſenſible afterwards of the Kindneſs, as well as of the Wiſdom of God, in denying us thoſe things which we (perhaps with too much Urgency and Importunity;) did requeſt of him. And *we* as little know what is bad for us; we are apt to fret and complain when ever any thing croſs or adverſe happens to us, and yet afterwards we often ſee Reaſon to ſay with the *Pſalmiſt*, *It is good for us that we have been in Trouble.* Seeing therefore that God knows always both what is beſt, and how beſt to bring

it about, it is very reaſonable for us to ſubmit to his Will; eſpecially,

Seeing he is as *good* and *gracious* as he is wiſe; all his Thoughts towards us are kind, and he deſigns our Good by all the Diſpenſations of his Providence: conſidering which, we may be always well aſſured, that whatever he chuſes and orders for us, tho' it be not to our preſent liking, is more for our Good than any thing we could have choſen for our ſelves. So that we may with good Reaſon live more at Eaſe, freer from Care and Fear, under the Care and Protection of his good Providence, than we could do, if we might have our own Wiſhes and Deſires in every thing; and we do indeed wiſh the beſt which we can for our ſelves, when we ſay, *not our Will, but thine be done.* But,

2. Taking the Will of God in the other Senſe, for the Will of his Precepts or Commands, there are likewiſe ſeveral things which we may learn and be inſtructed in, by

by our Uſe of this Petition; *thy Will be done.* For,

(1.) Being here taught by our *Saviour* to make it a Matter of Prayer to God, that his Will may be done; that is, that he would pleaſe to give us his Grace to do thoſe things which he requires of us. We may hence be admoniſhed, that we can't of our ſelves do the Will of God as we ought to do, nor perform acceptable Obedience to him, without the divine Grace and Aſſiſtance: [a] for we need not be beholden to another for that which is in our own Power; we need not ask that of another, which we our ſelves can do without his Help. Being therefore here taught to pray every Day for the divine Grace, to enable us to do the Will of God, we are hereby reminded of our own Weakneſs and Impotence; that we can neither begin a good Work without the Motion of the

[a] Quid ſtultius quàm orare ut facias, quod in poteſtate habeas? *Aug. de Nat. & Gratiâ. Cap.* 18. *in Brug. in loc.*

holy Spirit, nor make any Progreſs in Holineſs and Virtue, without freſh Supplies of the divine Grace, according to that of the Apoſtle, *Phil.* ii. 13. *It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good Pleaſure.* Our Belief of this Truth, that we can do nothing well of our ſelves, without the Help of God, is plainly the Ground of this Petition; and this we do tacitly, and by Implication, acknowledge to God every time we repeat it. When we pray to God to give us his Grace, to do his Will, we own and confeſs that we *are not ſufficient of our ſelves to do any thing as of our ſelves, but that our Sufficiency is of God*, as the *Apoſtle* ſays, 2 *Cor.* iii. 5.

And the Conſideration of the Neceſſity of the divine Grace, to enable us to do the Will of God, ought in Reaſon to make us diligent and conſtant in imploring it; according to that Direction which is given us by our *Saviour*, *Luke* xi. 9, *&c. Ask, and it ſhall be given you; ſeek, and ye ſhall find; knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you:——for if ye, being evil, know how*

how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?

(2.) Being here taught by our *Saviour*, to implore the Aſſiſtance of the divine Grace, to enable us to do the Will of God, we may hence conclude that God requires nothing more of us, in order to render our ſelves accepted to him, than we are able, by the Aſſiſtance of the divine Grace, to perform. For certainly our *Saviour* would not teach us to pray for a thing which can't be; nay, he himſelf has told us that one of the Conditions of a prevailing Prayer to God, is to believe that our Requeſt will be granted; *Mar.* xi. 24. *Whatſoever things ye deſire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye ſhall have them:* but if the Matter of our Requeſt be impoſſible, we can't believe that it will be granted. Being therefore here taught by our *Saviour*, to pray that God's Will may be performed by us, it is certainly poſſible that it may be performed, tho'

not perfectly, tho' not without much Mixture of humane Frailty and Imperfection; yet at leaſt with Sincerity, and in ſuch manner, as God, conſidering our Infirmity, will for *Chriſt's* Sake graciouſly accept.

And the Conſideration of this, that God requires nothing of us, but what by the Aſſiſtance of his Grace he will enable us to perform, is a good Encouragement to us to ſet about our Work with Cheerfulneſs and Vigour, and to keep us from ever being daunted or diſcouraged, by any Difficulty or Oppoſition which we may meet with in the doing of it; conſidering how mightily we are aſſiſted by the divine Grace, we may ſay with the *Apoſtle*, that we *can do all things thro' Chriſt that ſtrengthneth* us; and ſetting to our Work with Courage, and good hope of Succeſs, we ſhall find the Difficulty thereof much leſs than we feared.

(3.) As we pray, ſo we ought likewiſe to practiſe. If therefore we do earneſtly deſire that the Will of God may be done, we ſhall alſo earneſtly endeavour the Accompliſhment

pliſhment of our own Petition; and in order to this, we ſhall uſe all Diligence to acquaint our ſelves with the Will of God; by conſtant reading in the holy Scripture, in which the whole Will of God is plainly revealed, and which is *able to make us wiſe unto Salvation.* Being deſirous to walk in the way of God's Commandments, we ſhall be careful to guide our ſelves by the Direction of his holy *Word*, which, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſays, *is a Lamp unto our Feet, and a Light unto our Path*, Pſal. cxix. 105.

And then when we know what the Will of our Lord is, it is our Duty, (a Duty indeed comprehending all other Duties;) which we are not only reminded of, but ſtrictly obliged to by our Uſe of this Petition, to ſet our ſelves with all Diligence, to the doing of all thoſe things which are required of us. For we contradict our own Petition, and are inconſiſtent with our ſelves, if ever we oppoſe in our own Practice, that good and perfect Will of God, which we pray may be done.

(4.) And laſtly; by our Uſe of this Clauſe of the Lord's Prayer, we are not only taught the Neceſſity of Obedience to the Will and Command of God, but we are likewiſe inſtructed in the Nature and neceſſary Qualifications of an acceptable Obedience; for we pray not only that God's Will may be done in Earth by us Men, but that it may be *ſo* done by us on Earth, *as it is in Heaven*; *i. e.* as it is done by the holy Angels; and how that is, I have already ſhewed.

As therefore we deſire in this Petition, that the Will of God may be done by *all* the Inhabitans of the Earth, as it is by *all* the holy Angels in Heaven; we ought to endeavour this, as much as lies in our Power, by teaching, inſtructing, and admoniſhing one another; we ought, according to the Apoſtle's Precept, to *conſider one another, to provoke unto Love, and to good Works*, Heb. x. 24. But eſpecially, our Zeal to reform the World, ſhould be chiefly exerciſed in our own Families, which we ſhould take Care to have well inſtructed

inſtructed in their Duties, and by prudent Diſcipline held to the Exerciſe and Practice thereof; according to the good Example given us by *Abraham*, the *Father of the Faithful*, concerning whom we have this Teſtimony given by God himſelf, *Gen.* xviii. 19. *I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Juſtice and Judgment.*

Again; as we pray that we our ſelves, and all Men upon Earth, may obey the Will of God with *Willingneſs* and *Cheerfulneſs*, as the Angels in Heaven do; we ought, in Compliance with our own Petition, to be cheerful in our own Obedience, to delight our ſelves in the Law of God; to love the thing which he commands, and to do the Will of God from the Heart; according to the Example given us by our bleſſed *Saviour*, in *Joh.* iv. 34. *My Meat is to do the Will of him that ſent me, and to finiſh his Work.* And thus likewiſe did the *Pſalmiſt*; ſeveral Teſtimonies of which we have in *Pſal.* cxix. *I have rejoiced in the way of thy Teſtimonies,*

nies, as much as in all Riches, ℣. 14. *I love thy Commands above Gold, yea, above fine Gold,* ℣. 127. *The Law of thy Mouth is better unto me, than thouſands of Gold and Silver,* ℣. 72. *I rejoice at thy Word, as one that findeth great Spoil,* ℣. 162. *My Soul hath kept thy Teſtimonies, and I love them exceedingly.* ℣. 167.

Again; the holy Angels in Heaven, as they obey *heartily*, ſo they undertake *readily*, the Work they are ſet to; and thus we pray in this Petition, that we may do likewiſe; and as we pray, ſo we ought to practiſe. It is our Duty therefore which we are reminded of, and engag'd to, by our Uſe of this Petition, to undertake *readily* the Work and Buſineſs God has given us to do, to take the firſt Intimation of his Pleaſure, and to comply with his Will upon the firſt Knowledge which we have of it; according to the Example of the ſame holy *Pſalmiſt*, Pſal. cxix. 59, 60. *I thought on my Ways, and turned my Feet unto thy Teſtimonies; I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.*

Again;

Again; what the holy Angels undertake, at the Command of God, they *ſpeedily* execute; they do their Work diligently, they loſe no Time from it, 'till it be accompliſhed. And in this likewiſe we pray, in this Petition, that our Obedience may be like theirs. In order to which therefore it is our Duty, according to the Directions given us in Scripture, *not to be ſlothful in Buſineſs, but fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord*, Rom. xii. 11. And *whatſoever our Hand findeth to do, to do it with all our Might*, Eccleſ. ix. 10.

Laſtly; the holy Angels (as I obſerved before) make no Difference in the Commands of God; they do not prefer one before another; they never decline any Work which they are ſet to: and ſuch likewiſe our Obedience to the Commands of God ought to be; ſuch we pray it may be, when we ſay, *thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.* In Complyance therefore with our own Prayer, our Obedience ought to be *conſtant*, and *uniform*, and *impartial*; and unleſs it be ſo, according to the utmoſt of our Power, it will be neither

ther accepted by God, nor profitable to our ſelves; for *then*, ſays the *Pſalmiſt*, *i. e.* then only, *ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect unto all thy Commandments*; *Pſal.* cxix. 6. And we are told by St. *James*, Ch. 2. ℣. 10. that *whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all.*

Thus the Will of God is done in Heaven, by the Angels, and thus we pray it may be done on Earth by us Men; in this manner therefore we ought to endeavour our ſelves to do it.

And indeed, after all which we can do, we ſhall be but unprofitable Servants; when we ſhall have done the beſt we can, we ſhall have only *done what was our Duty to do*; ſo that the only thing which can ſet any Value even upon our beſt Services, is when we thus do the Will of God from the Heart: when out of a true Love to God, we likewiſe have a Love to his Commandments, and take Delight therein, and perform them with a ready and willing Mind, and a cheerful Heart, as the

Angels

Angels in Heaven do. And this, if we do, while we continue upon Earth, our Reward will be great in Heaven; and living now here, as the Angels do in Heaven, we our ſelves ſhall be made equal to the Angels, when we come thither.

The God of Peace therefore, who brought again from the Dead our Lord Jeſus, *that great Shepherd of the Sheep, thro' the Blood of the everlaſting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work, to do his Will in all things while on Earth, even as the Angels in Heaven do, working in you that which is well-pleaſing in his Sight, thro'* Jeſus Chriſt *our Lord; to whom, &c. be Glory for ever and ever.* Amen.

Give us, this Day, our *DAILY BREAD*, EXPLAINED.

DISCOURSE VI.

Give us this Day our daily Bread, explained.

MATTH. vi. 11.

Give us this Day our daily Bread.

IN the Lord's Prayer, of which I am now diſcourſing, there are, beſides the Preface and the Concluſion, ſix Petitions; the three firſt reſpecting chiefly God's Glory, the three laſt our own Good. And of the three former I have already ſpoken; I come now to ſpeak of the latter.

And here we very reaſonably begin firſt with begging of God that Good which is the

firſt in Nature, and without which we cannot be capable of enjoying any other Good, *viz.* the Preſervation of our Being: and this we beg of God in the fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, of which I am now to diſcourſe; *give us this Day our daily Bread.* Which Petition (according to the Method formerly propoſed,) I ſhall firſt explain, ſhewing what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to God: and II. I ſhall ſhew what good Leſſons we may learn from our Uſe of this Petition; what Duties it inſtructs us in.

I. I ſhall explain the Petition, and ſhew what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to God; *give us this Day our daily Bread.*

And for the Explication of it; I ſhall, 1. Shew what is meant by *Bread:* 2. What is meant by *daily Bread:* and, 3. Why we are taught to ask only for the Bread of the preſent Day; give us, *this Day*, our daily Bread.

1. What

1. What is meant by *Bread.*

Now Bread is the Staff of Life, as'tis called in Scripture, *Lev.* xxvi. 26. 'Tis the main Prop and Support of our frail and mortal Bodies, *Pſal.* cv. 16. 'Tis what we can't well live without, and with which alone we may live well enough, *Iſaiah* iii. 1. And therefore Bread is oftentimes in Scripture ſet to ſignify whatſoever is neceſſary for the Support, Convenience, or Comfort of Life. *Ezek.* iv. 16. v. 16. xiv. 13.

And in this large Senſe, without doubt, it ought to be taken here; for this Being the only Petition of the Lord's Prayer which relates to Temporals, it muſt be underſtood as comprehending all the temporal things which we have need of; ſo that in asking for Bread, we ask alſo for Drink and for Cloaths, and for Shelter from the Weather, and for Protection from Dangers, and for every thing elſe which is needful for us. For what we mean in this Petition, is, to beg the Preſervation of this Life, and conſequently by Bread, which is the only thing that we name in particular, we

muſt be underſtood to mean, whatſoever is neceſſary for the Preſervation of Life, every thing which we cannot live without.

And this, I believe, was all which our *Saviour* deſign'd we ſhould mean to pray for in this Petition, that is, only for all worldly Neceſſaries. Not but that when we utter theſe Words, we may alſo very piouſly enlarge our Deſires; and at the ſame time that we beg Neceſſaries for our Bodies, beg Neceſſaries for our Souls too; and particularly for the Word of God, which is the Bread of Life, and as neceſſary for the well-being of our Souls, as Bread is for the Suſtenance of our Bodies, according to that of our *Saviour*, Matth. iv. 4. *Man ſhall not live by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.* We may therefore, I ſay, underſtand this Petition in this large Senſe, as praying to God for all manner of Neceſſaries, for our Souls, as well as for our Bodies; and for the next Life, as well as for this Life.

And ſo we are taught in that brief Explication of the Lord's Prayer which is in the Church Catechiſm where the Scholar being

being asked, [*What deſireſt thou of God in this Prayer?*] is taught, in that part of the Anſwer which relates to this Petition, to ſay, *I pray unto God that he will ſend us all things that be needful, both for our Souls and Bodies.*

But that other more reſtrained Senſe, which I mentioned before of the Word *Bread*, underſtanding thereby only Neceſſaries for the Support of this Life, being the principal, if not the only Senſe, in which I ſuppoſe our *Saviour* meant it in this Petition, is the only Senſe of it which I ſhall at preſent inſiſt upon; eſpecially becauſe the ſpiritual Senſe of this Petition, according to which we are hereby ſuppoſed to beg Neceſſaries for our Souls, may, I think, be better reduced to the two following Petitions, *forgive us our Treſpaſſes*, and, *lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil*; for thoſe two things which we are taught to beg there, *viz.* Pardon and Grace, do comprehend as fully all things needful for our Souls, as this Petition, taken in its prime and natural Senſe, does all things needful for our Bodies.

2. The ſecond thing which, in order to the Explication of this Petition, I was to ſhew, is, what is meant by *daily Bread*; give us our daily Bread; in the *Greek* 'tis ἄρτον ἐπιούσιον. And concerning the ſtrict and proper Meaning of this Word, ἐπιούσιος, there is a great Diſpute among the Criticks; but I think the moſt eaſy and natural Senſe of the Word, as well as the moſt agreeable to this Place, is that of St. *Chryſoſtom*, who ſays, that is ἐπιούσιος which is neceſſary ἐπὶ τὴν οὐσίαν; *i.e.* which is neceſſary for our Subſiſtence.

So that what we mean, when in the Lords Prayer we beg of God our *daily Bread*, ἄρτον ἐπιούσιον, is ſo much Proviſion as is neceſſary for the Body, and no more than is neceſſary. We are not here taught to beg of God Riches and Honours, Dainties and Delicacies, but only Bread; and that not to pleaſe our Palates, and delight our Senſes, but only to preſerve our Bodies in Health and Strength; we deſire not a full Barn, or a rich Wardrobe, or a ſumptuous Palace, becauſe without all theſe we may

may live, and we may live well enough too: but all that we beg for, is what we can't live without; or at moſt, only what we can't live well without; *i. e.* only the convenient Supports, Recruits, and Refreſhments of Nature. So that the ſubject Matter of this Petition, the ἄρτος ἐπιούσιος, the *daily Bread* which we here beg for, is the ſame which the Prophet *Agur* prays for in *Prov.* xxx. 8. and calls *Food convenient* for him: *give me*, ſays he, *neither Poverty nor Riches*; *feed me with Food convenient for me.*

3. I proceed now in the third Place, in order to the farther Explication of this Petition, to ſhew what is the Meaning of our ſaying, give us *this Day*; why we are taught to pray for the neceſſary Proviſion only of the preſent Day.

Now the Word σήμερον, *this Day*, give us *this Day*, is a farther Reſtriction or Limitation of our Deſires of temporal good things, which had been very much limited and reſtrained before. For when we were taught to ask only for *Bread*, our

Deſires were limited only to the Neceſſaries of Life; and when we were taught to ask only for *daily Bread*, or *ſufficient Bread*, our Deſires were again reſtrained only to Neceſſaries, only to ſuch things as are requiſite for our Being and Subſiſtence here. And when we are here taught to ask for a Supply of theſe Neceſſaries of Life, only for *the preſent Day*, give us *this Day*; this reſtrains our Deſires ſtill more; for by ſaying, give us *this Day*, we exclude all anxious Care and Thoughtfulneſs, even about Neceſſaries, for the future time: according to thoſe Precepts of our *Saviour* which follow after, at the end of this Chapter; *take no Thought for your Life, what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink, nor yet for your Body, what ye ſhall put on*, ℣. 25, &c. And again; *therefore take no Thought, ſaying, what ſhall we eat, or what ſhall we drink, or wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed?* And again; *take no Thought for to Morrow, for the Morrow ſhall take Thought for the things of it ſelf.* Thus we are taught our Duty by expreſs Precept; and this

this Duty we do in part practiſe, when we ſay this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, *give us, this Day, our daily Bread.* We deſire not Store of Proviſion before-hand, but only neceſſary Proviſion, when we want it, and as we have Occaſion to uſe it: not a full Granary, but a Meals Meat; not Goods laid up for many Years, but only ſuch as we ſhall have Uſe and Occaſion for this Day, which we are already entred upon. We do not deſire to have an Eſtate ſettled upon us for Life, that ſo after that we may live of our ſelves, upon our own Income, without being farther beholden to any body; but we are contented to live every Day upon the freſh Supplies of Providence: and by putting up this Petition, by ſaying, *give us this day our daily Bread*, we do, in Effect, declare that we ſhall be well pleaſed if we do not want, altho' we ſhould have nothing before-hand.

And there was good Reaſon why we ſhould be taught to put up our Requeſts to God for temporal things, with this Reſtriction and Limitation; *viz.*

(1.) Be-

(1.) Becauſe we are really dependent Creatures, and muſt live upon Providence whether we will or no; for we can never be ſo rich, and ſo well furniſh'd and provided for, as not to ſtand in continual Need of the Bleſſing of Providence, to preſerve our Store, and to make it uſeful to us. So that the rich Man has no leſs Reaſon to put up this Petition than the poor Man; for as rich as he is, he may, even in one Day's Time, by a Blaſt of Providence, become as poor as the poorest, be reduc'd ſo low as to want even a Meals-Meat.

Beſides, there is good Reaſon that we ſhould beg but only for the Neceſſaries of the preſent Day, becauſe this is all which we are allowed to be concerned or thoughtful about; *take no Thought for to Morrow*, ſays our *Saviour:* and if we may not be thoughtful about to Morrow, then we ought to be content if we have now ſo much as will ſerve our preſent Needs, and not to be earneſt in our Deſires to have any thing, till we need it.

More-

Moreover; there is great Reaſon in this Petition, give us *this Day* our daily Bread; becauſe the Bread of this Day is all which we can need; nay, indeed, 'tis all which we can uſe at preſent; for if we had never ſo much Proviſion in Store, we could not eat or drink for a Week or a Month hence; and therefore, if we have but every Day as much as we have Occaſion to uſe that Day, it is as well for us as if we had had it a Week or a Month before; for even then we could not have uſed it, we muſt have kept it by us till we had wanted it, and all that time it would have done us no good: ſo that if we have it but when we need it, we have as much of it as we can in Reaſon deſire.

And ſo much may ſerve for the Explication of this Petition; *give us, this Day, our daily Bread.* By what has been ſaid we may ſee what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to God; namely this, "We are "ſenſible, O Father, that our whole De- "pendence is upon thee; that we have "nothing, and can have nothing, but "from

" from thy Bounty; and this Bounty and " Goodneſs of thine we ſtand in need of " every Day, for the Support of our Life " it ſelf, on the Continuance whereof de- " pends our Enjoyment of all thy other " Mercies. We beſeech thee, therefore, " that thou would'ſt be pleaſed to pre- " ſerve that Life which thou haſt given " us, and in order to that, that thou " would'ſt continually, as we have Need, " beſtow upon us all things neceſſary for " the Support of Life; Food convenient, " wholſome Lodging, warm Cloathing, " Health and Strength of Body, and " whatever elſe thou ſeeſt needful for us, " when we need it, and according as we " need it. We deſire that thou would'ſt " ſo long preſerve us in this Life, as is " expedient either for thy Glory, or our " own Good; and ſo order things, that " while we continue here our Life may be " comfortable to us." This is the Sum of what we beg of God in this Petition.

I proceed now, according to the Method at firſt laid down, and which has

been already obſerved, in all the foregoing Petitions,

II. To ſhew, in the ſecond Place, what good Leſſons we may learn from this Petition; what Duties it inſtructs us in. And,

1. Being here taught by our *Saviour* himſelf, to make our daily Bread, *i. e.* ſuch things as are neceſſary for the Support and Comfort of this Life, a Matter of our conſtant and daily Prayer to God; and that too in this very ſhort Prayer, conſiſting but of ſix Petitions in all: One thing which we may obſerve, and learn from hence, is this; that provided we do but *ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs*, we are allowed by God to ſeek for other things; *i. e.* for the Neceſſaries and Comforts of this Life, with a ſecondary and ſubordinate Care. For what we may pray to God for, that we may certainly deſire; nay, indeed, our Prayers are hypocritical if we do not deſire it; and what we may deſire, that we

may

may ſeek and endeavour to obtain: from whence therefore it is plain that thoſe evangelical Precepts, whereby we are commanded to *be careful for nothing*, and to *take no Thought what we ſhall eat, or drink, or put on*, are not to be underſtood abſolutely, but comparatively; not as forbidding all Care for this Life, but only an exceſſive and prepoſterous Care, or an anxious Thoughtfulneſs and Concern about it. And this Moderation in our Care, for the things of this Life, we are taught even in this Petition; wherein (as I obſerv'd before) we beg only Neceſſaries, and thoſe too only for the preſent Time, the Bread of this Day. And that our Care for theſe things ought to be ſubordinate to our Care for better things, is likewiſe clearly enough intimated by that Place which this Petition hath in our Prayer; for we pray not even for the Neceſſaries of Life, till we have firſt prayed for the Advancement of God's Honour, for the Enlargement of his Kingdom, and for the Performance and Accompliſhment of his Will.

2. Ano-

2. Another good Leſſon which we are taught by our Uſe of this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, *give us this Day our daily Bread*, is this; that God is the Giver of all good things to us, temporal as well as ſpiritual, and of our Life it ſelf, and of the Continuance thereof. For it would be needleſs to beg our Bread of another, if we had it of our own, or could give it to our ſelves; and it would be fruitleſs, and to no Purpoſe, to beg it of God, if it were not his to give.

But alas! we our ſelves cannot ſubſiſt a Moment, much leſs a Day without him; 'tis *in him that we live, move, and have our Being*, Acts xvii. 28. *By him all things conſiſt*, Coloſſ. i. 17. *He upholds all things by the Word of his Power*, Heb. i. 3. 'Tis his good Providence which delivers us from Dangers, ſome perhaps ſeen or foreknown by us, and a great many others which we are delivered from, before we ſo much as diſcerned our ſelves to be in any Danger. 'Tis he who provides Food for our Hunger, and Raiment for our Cloathing

Cloathing; who makes the Graſs and the Corn to grow for our Uſe, who gives to the Earth a fructiferous Nature, who waters it with the Dew and Rain from Heaven, and with the Springs which run among the Hills: 'tis he who refreſhes it with his Sun, who gives fruitful Seaſons, who grants us Power to gather in the Fruits of the Earth, and gives us Ability to uſe them for our own Suſtenance: 'tis he who makes them yield kind and wholſome Nutriment to the Body, and gives us an Appetite to take, a Palate to reliſh, and a Stomach to digeſt them: 'tis he who make the Beaſts of the Field to increaſe and multiply, to ſerve for our Uſe both of Nouriſhment and Cloathing; and who gives us Skill to make Uſe of what they afford, for the Purpoſes it was deſigned. We are poor, ſorry, helpleſs Creatures of our ſelves; we could do none of all theſe things for our ſelves, neither could any thing elſe be uſeful and ſerviceable to us without God.

We ſay indeed oftentimes, in common Diſcourſe, that ſuch a thing comes to

paſs

paſs by Accident, or that ſuch a thing is the Work and Effect of Nature; but when we ſay ſo, we ſpeak fooliſhly and ignorantly; for there is in truth no ſuch thing as Chance or Accident; for *not ſo much as a Sparrow falls to the Ground without God*, as our *Saviour* ſays; and even *the very Hairs of our Head are all numbred.* And when the *Lot is caſt into the Lap, the whole diſpoſing thereof is of the Lord.* Neither is there any ſuch thing as Nature working blindfold, and by it ſelf, without the Concurrence of the firſt Spring or Mover. For, as our *Saviour* likewiſe teaches us, 'tis God who *provides Food for the Fowls*, and who *cloaths the Graſs, and Lillies of the Field.* So that what we call Chance is Providence; and what we aſcribe to Nature, is the Work of the God of Nature; who knows exactly what Power and Strength he has given to ſecond Cauſes, and could have given them more or leſs; and could, if he had pleaſed, as eaſily work and produce the ſame Effects, by

the Word of his Mouth, without natural Cauſes, as with them.

In a Word; whatever is the ſecond and immediate Cauſe, 'tis God who is the firſt Cauſe of all; 'tis he who both gave us our Being at firſt, and every Moment continues us in it; and of his free Bounty gives us all things richly to enjoy. And all this we are taught to believe in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer; and all this we do actually acknowledge every time we repeat theſe Words, and ſay, *give us this Day our daily Bread.*

3. What is fit Matter of Petition when we want it, is juſt Ground of Thankſgiving when we have receiv'd it. If therefore God be the Author of our Being, and of the Continuance thereof, and of all the good things which we enjoy in it, to him of Right and in Juſtice belongs the Praiſe and Glory of all; and therefore, as we are here taught by our *Saviour* to look up to God for every thing, for Temporals as well as Spirituals; ſo we are taught by

by the *Apoſtle* to *give Thanks to God* in *every thing*, or for *every thing*, in 1 *Theſſ.* v. 18.

And 'tis indeed a great Inſtance of Baſeneſs and Diſingenuity, to beg of God our daily Bread, and not alſo to thank him when he has given it; to own our Dependence upon him when we want and crave his Bounty, and not to confeſs the ſame when we have been Partakers of his Kindneſs; to diſcern from whence we muſt have a Supply when we ſtand in Need, and not to ſee who was our Benefactor when our Needs are ſupplied, and to render him our Thanks for the ſame.

And yet, as baſe and diſingenuous as this is, 'tis a Fault which moſt Men are notoriouſly guilty of. Of the *ten Lepers*, who came to our *Saviour* to be healed, there was but *one* (tho' they were all healed,) *that returned to give Glory to God*, *Luke* xvii. 18. And I fear the Proportion of thoſe now-a-days, who receive the Benefits of God with a thankful Heart, is not more or greater. When we are in Affliction, and have no Proſpect of Help

from any other Hand, then we commonly betake our ſelves to God, and cry mightily to him for Deliverance; but when we are delivered, we ſoon forget our Benefactor: like the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, of whom the *Pſalmiſt* ſays, *Pſal.* lxxviii. 34, *&c.* that *when he ſlew them, then they ſought him, and they returned and enquired early after God*; *then they remembred that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer*; but when once their Danger was over, *they remembred not his Hand, nor the Day when he delivered them from the Enemy*, *℣.* 42. And ſo it is generally with us; we ſee the Need of his Help when we are in Diſtreſs, but we do not ſee the Kindneſs of it when we are deliver'd: when we want Bread, we go to God for it; but when we are fed to the full, and waxen fat, like *Jeſurun* we *kick againſt him*, being *grown thick*, and *covered with Fatneſs*, we *forſake the God that made us*, *and lightly eſteem the Rock of our Salvation*, Deut. xxxii. 15.

But

But it ſhould not be thus; and our conſtant and daily Uſe of this Petition is an excellent Means to cure us of our Unthankfulneſs; for when we ſay, to Day, *give us this Day our daily Bread*; if we mind what we ſay, and are affected with it, it can't but remind us that we receiv'd our Bread Yeſterday from the ſame Hand from which we do now beg it, and that the Bread of Yeſterday was then as neceſſary, and as ſeaſonable a Supply, as the Bread of this Day will be now; and conſequently that we ought in Reaſon to be as heartily thankful for the Good we have receiv'd, as we are now earneſtly deſirous to receive more.

4. Another good Leſſon which we are inſtructed in, by our Uſe of this Petition, *give us this Day our daily Bread*, is this; that we ought to moderate our Deſires of all worldly good things, and particularly that we ſhould not extend them to a time very long hence to come: by our Uſe of this Petition we are plainly

taught that there is no Reaſon why we ſhould do ſo.

For ſince 'tis the ſame God who gave us our Being, and who preſerves us in it; ſince 'tis the ſame God, of whoſe Bounty we have already receiv'd all things needful, who muſt likewiſe ſupply all our future Needs, we have no Reaſon to diſtruſt his Goodneſs or his Power; but may ſafely *caſt all our Cares for the future upon him, who has* hitherto *cared for us*, and upon whom we have hitherto lived ever ſince we were born. For, as our *Saviour* argues, at the 25th ℣. of this Chapter, *the Life is more than Meat, and the Body than Raiment*; why then ſhould we fear that he who has given us Life, will not give us wherewithal to ſupport this Life? Or why ſhould we think that he who has given us a Body, either cannot or will not give us Raiment to cloath the Body? For he who has done that which is more, is certainly able to do that which is leſs; and he who has done us a great Kindneſs already, will not certainly deny us a ſmaller.

Beſides,

Beſides, we are Creatures but of a Day; our Life here is as nothing; we may be paſt uſing any thing of this World, in a very ſhort time; why then ſhould our Care for Life extend farther than our Life it ſelf?

To Day indeed we want many things, and therefore we may reaſonably deſire them; we may well pray, as we are here taught by our *Saviour*, *give us this Day our daily Bread*; *i e.* all things which are needful for this Day; but to Morrow we may be paſt uſing any of theſe things; we may conſequently then have no Need of them; and if not, we ſhall be as well without them.

However, if we live till to Morrow, *the Morrow will take Thought for the things of it ſelf*; for we prayed Yeſterday for our daily Bread, and we had it; and we did put up the ſame Petition to Day, and it is granted to us: and therefore if we live till to Morrow, let us but only put up the ſame Requeſt again; and there is no Cauſe to doubt, but that God, our heavenly Father, who is *the ſame Ye-*

ſterday, to Day, and for ever, will be as willing and as able to grant our Requeſt then, as he is to Day, and as he was Yeſterday, and indeed has been every Day of our Life which is already paſt.

If therefore he thinks fit to prolong our Life to another Day, there is no doubt but that, upon our Petition, he will grant to us the neceſſary Means of preſerving it: and, on the other ſide, if it be his Pleaſure that this ſhall be our laſt Day, we ſhall need to be concerned for no more.

5. From this Petition of the Lord's Prayer we are likewiſe inſtructed in the Nature of Contentment. We hence learn what Portion or Quantity it is, which we ought to be ſatisfyed and contented with; for we are taught here to deſire and requeſt of God, only *daily Bread, i.e.* only the Neceſſaries, or the great Conveniencies of Life: and therefore certainly, if we have all which we our ſelves do deſire, and all which we ask for, we have great Cauſe to be ſatisfyed with our Portion.

And

And thus we are plainly directed by the *Apoſtle*, 1 Tim. vi. 7, 8. *We brought nothing into this World, and it is certain we can carry nothing out; and having Food and Raiment, let us be therewith content. We brought nothing into this World*; we came into it naked and helpleſs, not knowing in the leaſt how we ſhould do to live in it ſo much as one Day; and yet by God's Bleſſing we have hitherto lived in it, and have had all things needful ſupplied to us by the divine Bounty; and *it is certain that we can carry nothing out*; *i. e.* whether we have much or little in this World, when we go from hence we muſt leave all we have here behind us. And therefore, ſays the *Apoſtle*, ſeeing we had nothing of our own when we came hither, and ſeeing we can have nothing of our own, nor any Uſe of any thing which was our own, when we go from hence; if we have but enough to carry us thro' this World, this is all which we can have need of, this is all which we ſhall be the better for; and therefore if we have but

thus

thus much, we have good Reaſon to be ſatisfy'd with what we have; we have no Reaſon to murmur and complain againſt Providence, that we have no more. *Having Food and Raiment*, ſays he, (by which he means only the Neceſſaries of Life, and under which Words he comprehends all things that are neceſſary; *having Food and Raiment,) let us be therewith content.*

6. Another thing which we are inſtructed in, by this Petition, is our Obligation to Frequency and Conſtancy in Prayer; for here we are taught to pray only for the Bread of this preſent Day; *give us this Day our daily Bread.* Now ſuppoſe our Requeſt granted; ſuppoſe that God does give us, this Day, the Bread of this Day, *i e.* all Neceſſaries which we have preſent Occaſion for, yet what ſhall we do for the Bread of to Morrow? To Morrow, if we live till then, we ſhall have the ſame Needs which we have to Day; how ſhall we get them ſupplied? How do we think, but the ſame way by which

our

our preſent Wants are ſupplied; *i.e.* by Prayer to God? But we do not pray to Day for the Bread of to Morrow, and therefore it plainly follows that we muſt pray for that to Morrow; and the next Day, for the Bread of the next Day; and ſo again and again, every Day while we live. And every Day of our Lives, which we paſs over without Prayer to God, we are in Danger of wanting even the Neceſſaries of Nature; for God has promiſed even theſe Neceſſaries only upon the Condition of our asking for them; and we are not taught, we are not warranted to ask for the Neceſſaries of any Day, till the Day it ſelf be come.

Thus it appears that God deſign'd we ſhould live in a conſtant Dependence upon him, and that we ſhould pray to him continually; and if at any time we omit, or neglect this Duty, we have no Claim, by Promiſe, to his Protection and Bleſſing. He may indeed, of his abundant Goodneſs, give us what we want without our asking; and he is oftentimes very kind even to the unthankful and to the evil.

But

But from what God may do if he pleaſes, we can't argue that he will do it; ſo that we can have no good Aſſurance of the Continuance of his Kindneſs and Goodneſs to us, but upon the Condition of our own continual and inceſſant Prayers.

7. What we pray for, we ought alſo to labour for; and if we do not, 'tis a Sign our Deſires of it are not hearty, and ſo we may reaſonably fear our Prayers for it will not be ſucceſsful.

This is generally true in all our Petitions to God, whatever the Subject Matter of them is. For even when we pray for Spirituals, as for any Grace or Virtue, unleſs we likewiſe endeavour after it, and uſe the Means of obtaining it, there is no Promiſe of God, nor any good Reaſon to hope, that he will work it in us, or beſtow it upon us. And there is the ſame Reaſon for Temporals: and therefore another thing, which we are inſtructed in from this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, *give us this Day our daily Bread*, is, that 'tis our Duty alſo to ſeek honeſtly to get

get our own Living, by Diligence and Induſtry, in that lawful Trade, or Calling, or Profeſſion, which we have been brought up to, or are placed in. For there is no Reaſon ever to expect any thing by a Miracle, which may be obtained by the Uſe of natural Means; and therefore we may obſerve, (and it is a Caſe which ſuits well the Subject we are now ſpeaking of;) that while the *Iſraelites* were in a barren Wilderneſs, wherein was no Water, and nothing growing that was fit for Food, at leaſt not ſufficient for ſo great a Multitude; God was pleaſed to work Miracles for their Support: for *he clave the Rocks in the Wilderneſs, and gave them Drink as out of the great Depths*, Pſal. lxxviii. 15. *He brought Streams alſo out of the Rock, and cauſed Waters to run down like Rivers*, ℣. 16. and made the Streams flowing from this Fountain to follow them all the way as they went; whence the *Apoſtle* ſays, *they drank of that Rock that followed them*, [1 Cor. x. 4. *vid. Ham. Annot. in loc.*] He ſhewed his miraculous Power alſo in furniſhing a Table for them

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in the Wilderneſs, for *he commanded the Clouds from above, and opened the Doors of Heaven, and rained down Manna upon them to eat, and gave them of the Corn of Heaven*, Pſal. lxxviii. 23, 24. Thus did God then, when there was no other Supply to be had, give them every Day their daily Bread, as it were immediately with his own Hand. But when the Reaſon of this Miracle ceaſed, the Miracle ceaſed too; when they might be ſupplied the ordinary way, God thought not fit to ſupply them any longer in this extraordinary manner; and ſo 'tis noted in *Joſh.* v. 12. that when they were paſſed over *Jordan*, and encamped in *Gilgal*, *they did eat of the old Corn of the Land*; and that *the Manna ceaſed on the Morrow, after they had eaten of the old Corn of the Land*; *neither had the Children of Iſrael Manna any more*. They were then come to a Land inhabited, wherein the Corn of the laſt Year's Harveſt had been laid up by the *Canaanites* againſt their Coming, and wherein they themſelves, for the future, were to plant, and to ſow, and to reap; and therefore God,

God, by putting a Stop then to the falling of Manna, ſhewed them, that now in a fruitful Land Labour and Induſtry would be the Means of obtaining their Bread from God.

And 'tis generally ſo; honeſt Labour is the natural Means of procuring ſuch things as are needful for the Body; and there is nothing more than that, with the Bleſſing of God upon it, which is ordinarily needful for this Purpoſe. So that theſe being in our own Power, (for if God has given us Strength to labour, we may make Uſe of it; and if we beg his Bleſſing upon our Labour, he has promiſed to give it. I ſay, theſe being both in our own Power,) if we do not honeſtly work for our Living, as well as pray for it, we may be in want even of Neceſſaries, and yet there may be no Failure at all in God's Care and Providence; we may have none to blame for it, but our ſelves.

8. Being taught here to beg our Bread of God, we are hereby warned not to receive it but from him; not to receive it from

from the Devil, tho' it be offered to us by him.

Now then, we receive our Bread from God, not only when we receive it by a Miracle, as the *Iſraelites* did their *Manna* in the Wilderneſs; or as *Elijah* did the *Bread* and *Fleſh*, which were brought him every Morning and Evening by the *Ravens*; but likewiſe when it is the Fruit of our honeſt Induſtry, in ſome lawful Calling, or when it comes to us by Gift or Inheritance from thoſe who were lawfully poſſeſſed thereof.

And then, on the other ſide, we do receive our Bread not from God but from the Devil, when we procure it by any ſinful Means, by the Exerciſe of any unlawful Trade, by any Fraud or Injuſtice in our Dealings, by committing any Sin, and making Shipwrack of a good Conſcience, in order either to get or keep a Place of Profit.

For to beg our Bread of God, and at the ſame time to take any unlawful Courſe to procure it, is not only an Argument of our Diſtruſt of God, and that we do not think

think him able to grant our Requeſts, but 'tis likewiſe a great Indignity and Affront offered to him; for when we uſe any indirect or forbidden Means to obtain that which we ſeem to beg of God as his Gift, we thereby make it plainly appear, that all our Prayer to him is nothing elſe but Inſinuation and Flattery; and that tho' we make our Court to him in Words, our inward Worſhip and Devotion is paid to the Devil.

9. Laſtly; when we uſe this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, we do not ſay, give *me*, but give *us* our daily Bread; *i. e.* we beg for a Supply of other's Wants, as well as of our own; we pray that neither we our ſelves, nor any elſe, may want the Neceſſaries for the Support of Life. Now (as was ſaid before,) what we pray for, we ought alſo to endeavour: ſo that another Duty, which we are likewiſe plainly inſtructed in, by our Uſe of this Petition, is the great Duty of Charity and Bounty to the Poor and Needy.

For we pray to God that none may want, but we know there are a great many, who, either thro' Age or Sickneſs, are not able to work for their Living; and that there are a great many working and induſtrious Poor, who either cannot get ſufficient Employment; or who, by a full Employment, by riſing early, ſitting up late, and working hard all the Day, cannot get a ſufficient Maintenance for their numerous Family of Children; and that there are likewiſe a great many others, who having once had enough both for their own Needs, and to contribute towards the Maintenance of the helpleſs Poor, are by ſome Act of Providence, as by Fire, Robbery, Inundation, or the like, reduced to great Extremities, and for the preſent rendred uncapable to follow their former Employments, for want of Stock to work upon. When therefore we pray that even theſe alſo, as well as others, may have their Wants ſupplied, we ought our ſelves freely to contribute towards their Support. And in caſe God has ſo bleſſed our Induſtry, that we have more

more than we need for our ſelves, it is our Duty to aſſign the Overplus, or at leaſt a conſiderable Portion thereof, to the Uſe of thoſe who have nothing, or not enough to maintain them; and by our very putting up of this Petition, we engage our ſelves to do ſo. And ſo St. *James* argues, *Jam.* ii. 15, 16. *If a Brother or a Siſter be naked, and be deſtitute of daily Food, and one of you ſay unto them, Depart in Peace, be ye warmed, and be ye filled; notwithſtanding ye give them not thoſe things which be needful for the Body, what doth it profit?*

Indeed, when we have nothing to give to a Brother or a Siſter that is needy, but good Wiſhes only; when they are all which we can give, they will be accepted; but when God has put it into our Power to do them good, as well as to wiſh them well, and we only pray that their Wants may be ſupplied, but will not give any thing of our own towards it; it is a certain Sign that our Prayers are not hearty, and that our Deſires are not ſincere; it's a certain Argument, that the

Love which we profeſs towards them is only in Word and in Tongue, not as it ſhould be, *in Deed, and in Truth*, 1 Joh. iii. 18. For whatever a Man earneſtly deſires ſhould be done, he, of Courſe, endeavours to do, if it be in his Power.

Now he that adminiſtreth Seed to the Sower, both miniſter Bread for your Food, and multiply your Seed ſown, and increaſe the Fruits of your Righteouſneſs, 2 Cor. ix. 10.

Forgive us our

DEBTS,

As we forgive our

DEBTORS,

EXPLAINED.

DISCOURSE VII.

Forgive us our Debts, &c. explain'd.

MATTH. vi. 12, 14, 15.

And forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors.

For if ye forgive Men their Treſpaſſes, your heavenly Father will alſo forgive you.

But if ye forgive not Men their Treſ-

paſſes, neither will your Father forgive your Treſpaſſes.

HE firſt of theſe three Verſes, that I have choſen for my Text, contains the fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, the four former I have already diſcourſed of; *forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors.* In which Petition there is firſt a Requeſt put up to God, that he would forgive us our Treſpaſſes; and ſecondly there is a Reaſon added to enforce the Requeſt, or rather a Reaſon offered to God to induce him to grant our Requeſt; *as we forgive our Debtors*; or as St. *Luke* expreſſes it, *Luke* xi. 4. *for we alſo forgive every one that is indebted to us.* And the two other Verſes of the Text, *viz.* the 14th and 15th, give an Account of the Reaſon of the Addition of that laſt Clauſe in the Petition, *as we forgive our Debtors*; which (as our *Saviour* ſays) was this, becauſe our Sins will not be forgiven to us only upon our Petition,

on, unleſs we our ſelves do ſhew ſuch Mercy to Men, as we here requeſt of God; but that if we forgive Men their Treſpaſſes againſt us, then (upon our Repentance and Confeſſion, and begging Pardon of God) he alſo will forgive our Sins and Treſpaſſes againſt him. *For if ye*, &c.

Now, tho' it was very proper that this Account ſhould be given of the Reaſon of the Addition of that Clauſe in the Petition, *as we forgive our Debtors*, or, *for we forgive our Debtors*; yet it was not fit, that when our *Saviour* was teaching his Diſciples a Pattern or Form of Prayer, he ſhould break off in the middle of the Prayer it ſelf, to give this Account of that particular Clauſe; but it was more proper that he ſhould firſt recite the whole Prayer throughout, and then afterwards, in a Diſcourſe addreſſed to his Diſciples, give the Reaſon of any Clauſe in it which might be liable to be miſunderſtood, or excepted againſt; this therefore he does; for after he had taught them the fifth Petition,

tition, at the 12th ℣. in the Words before read to you; *forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors*; he immediately adds, in the 13th ℣, the ſixth Petition, and the Concluſion of the Prayer; and then, when he had quite finiſhed the whole Prayer, he adds thoſe Words before read, in the 14th and 15th Verſes, to give a Reaſon of that Clauſe in the fifth Petition, which he thought might not be well underſtood, or might be excepted againſt; and this Method of Diſcourſe was proper and natural.

But my preſent Deſign being to treat of every Clauſe or Petition of this Prayer by itſelf, to give the Meaning thereof, and to ground a practical Diſcourſe thereupon; I thought it would be more proper for me, now that I am treating of this fifth Petition, *forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors*, to treat alſo at the ſame time of that Reaſon which our *Saviour* himſelf gives of this Petition, in thoſe two Verſes which are added by the *Evangeliſt*, after he had recited the whole

whole Prayer. And this was the Reaſon why, when I named my Text, I named the 12th, 14th, and 15th Verſes; which three Verſes do all belong to the ſame Subject; omitting, for the preſent, the 13th ℣, which belongs to another Subject, and contains the ſixth Petition of this Prayer, and the Concluſion of it, and reſerving that to be diſcourſed of at another time. *Forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors*; that's the Petition I am now to treat of; and then follows the Reaſon of the laſt Clauſe of the Petition; *for if ye*, &c.

In diſcourſing of this fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, I ſhall obſerve the ſame Method which I have done in diſcourſing of the foregoing ones; *i. e.*

I. I ſhall explain the Meaning of it, and ſhew what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to God. And,

II. I ſhall ſhew what good Leſſons we are

are taught, what Duties we are inſtructed in, and oblig'd to, by our Uſe of this Petition.

And, in ſpeaking to theſe two Heads, I ſhall have Occaſion to diſcourſe as much as I ſuppoſe ſhall be needful, concerning thoſe Words which are added by our *Saviour*, in the 14th and 15th Verſes, to give an Account of the Reaſon of his making our Forgiveneſs of others, the Condition of our asking Forgiveneſs of God. *For if ye forgive*, &c.

I. I ſhall explain the Meaning of this Petition, and ſhew what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to God, *forgive us our Debts, as we*, &c.

Forgive us our Debts; the Word, in the *Greek* of St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel, is, ὀφειλήματα; which is truly and rightly here tranſlated, *Debts*; but in the *Greek* of St. *Luke's* Goſpel, 'tis ἁμαρτίας, *i. e. Sins*; and ſo 'tis there tranſlated, *forgive us our Sins:* and in the Form which we do

do commonly uſe, we ſay, *Treſpaſſes*; *forgive us our Treſpaſſes.* By which Word, *Treſpaſs*, we uſually underſtand a leſs Fault than we do by the Word *Sin*: and this Word, I mean the *Greek* Word, παράπτωμα, which is uſually tranſlated a Treſpaſs, is the ſame Word which is thrice uſed in the 14th and 15th Verſes, where our *Saviour* ſhews the Neceſſity of our forgiving Men their Treſpaſſes againſt us, in order to our obtaining of God the Forgiveneſs of our Sins or Treſpaſſes againſt him. *For if ye forgive Men their Treſpaſſes, your*, &c.

But it is all one which of theſe Words we uſe, *Debts*, or *Sins*, or *Treſpaſſes*; becauſe in this Place they muſt all have the ſame Meaning: for what is a *Treſpaſs* againſt God, but only the doing ſomething which he has forbidden? And this is likewiſe a *Sin*; for *Sin* (as the *Apoſtle* ſays,) *is the Tranſgreſſion of the Law*; and this ſame may alſo be well called a *Debt*; for by tranſgreſſing the Law of God in any Point, we become obnoxious to him, we

owe

owe him Satisfaction for the Injury, either by making Reparation, or, (ſince that can't be done by us,) by ſuffering the Puniſhment due to our Tranſgreſſion.

I ſhall therefore, for the Explication of this Petition, do theſe two things: 1. I ſhall explain the Matter of the Petition; I ſhall ſhew what it is which we here beg of God, what it is to have our Sins *forgiven* us. And, 2. I ſhall ſhew what it is which we do here declare we have done, and do; or do engage and promiſe that we will do, as a Condition on our Part, on which only we beg Forgiveneſs of God. Forgive us, *as we forgive our Debtors*; or, *as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us.*

1. I ſhall explain the Matter of the Petition; I ſhall ſhew what it is which we do here beg of God; *forgive us our Treſpaſſes*; what it is to have our Sins *forgiven* us.

Now by every Sin againſt God, by every Tranſgreſſion of his Laws, we affront the

the divine Majeſty, we reſiſt and oppoſe his Authority, we do Wrong and Injury to him, to whom all our Service is due; but now every Injury done to another, naturally obliges to Satisfaction, and we continue unjuſt till we repair the Damage we have done.

This therefore is what, by our Sins againſt God, we have made neceſſary to our ſelves, we muſt repair the Injury we have done him, we muſt pay the Debt which we owe him.

But alas! this is impoſſible for us to do; for all the Good we can do, extends not to him; and tho' we ſhould ſpend all the remaining Part of our Lives in his faithful Service, and never again at any time tranſgreſs his Commandments, this would be no Satisfaction or Amends to him. By this indeed we ſhould avoid running deeper in his Debt; but our barely forbearing to contract a new Debt, cannot be accounted a Payment of the Debt we have already contracted: no Man is ever thought to pay what he has borrow'd,

row'd, only by forbearing to borrow more. But this is all which we can poſſibly do, we can only forbear adding new Treſpaſſes to our former, but we can by no Means ever recompenſe, or make him Satisfaction, for thoſe which we have already done. It remains therefore that for theſe, we are, and always ſhall be liable to the Laſh of the Law; *i. e.* obnoxious to ſuffer the Puniſhment threatned by the Law, to the Tranſgreſſors of it; for *curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Law to do them.* And this Puniſhment comprehends all thoſe Evils which God hath any where threatned to Sin, all manner of Evils, ſpiritual and temporal, and eſpecially Death; *the Wages of Sin is Death*, ſays the *Apoſtle*, *i. e.* eternal Death; this appears by the Oppoſition which is there made by the *Apoſtle* between Death and Life; *the Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is eternal Life*; now that *Death* which is oppoſite to eternal Life, is *eternal Death*; *i. e.* the

i. e. the eternal Torment both of Body and Soul in Hell: this is the Wages of Sin, this is the Puniſhment due to every Tranſgreſſion of the Law of God; and this is what, being Sinners, we are liable to be ſentenced to, and to have inflicted upon us, whenever God pleaſes.

This therefore is what we pray for in this Petition, when we ſay, *forgive us our Treſpaſſes.* We pray that God would be pleaſed not to exact this Puniſhment of us; we pray, that ſince we can make him no true Satisfaction for the Injury we have done him, he, of his great Goodneſs and Clemency, would be pleaſed to paſs it by, and not exact any Satisfaction from us; *i. e.* that he would not inflict upon us any of thoſe Evils which he has threatned to the Tranſgreſſors of his Laws; and above all, not that which is the proper Wages of Sin, the eternal Torments of Hell. This is what we ask in this Petition, that God would not impute our Sins to us, to our Condemnation. *Forgive us our Treſpaſſes.*

But when we ſay, forgive us our Treſpaſſes, it is ſuppos'd that we have treſpaſſed; by the very asking Forgiveneſs of our Sins, we own that we have ſinned: for if we had no Need of Pardon, (as we ſhould not have if we were innocent,) there would be no Reaſon to ask Pardon. Nay indeed, to put up this Petition to God, to ſay, *forgive us our Treſpaſſes*, when at the ſame time we are not conſcious to our ſelves that we have ſinned, and that we do greatly ſtand in Need of Pardon, is no better than mocking or trifling with God.

And therefore we may well underſtand this Petition, for Pardon of Sin, as including in it a Confeſſion of our Sins to God, as well as a Prayer for Forgiveneſs.

I proceed now, in the ſecond Place,

2. To ſhew what it is which we here declare we have done, and do; or do engage and promiſe that we will do, as a Condition on our Part, on which only we

we beg Forgiveneſs of God; *forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors*; or, *as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us.*

And what we here declare and promiſe, is, that we have ſhewn, and that we do and will ſhew the ſame Kindneſs to our Brother who has injured us, which we beg God would ſhew to us who have treſpaſſed againſt him.

Now, (as was ſaid before,) what we beg of God, is, that ſince we cannot make him true Satisfaction for our Sins, he would not exact of us the Puniſhment of them; this therefore is what we here declare and engage, on our Part, *viz.* that we will not exact of our Brother a Debt which he owes us, if he be not able to pay it; or if he cannot recompenſe us for any other Injury, that we will not deſire that Satisfaction which the Law, if we ſhould go to the Strictneſs of it, would allow; *i. e.* to keep his Body in Priſon, or to put him to Pain and Miſery; by which we ſhould only do

him Evil, but do our ſelves no Good, receive no real Amends.

In a Word; this is what we here engage and promiſe, that in Caſe of any Injury or Wrong done to us, by any Neighbour, we will be content with ſuch Satisfaction as he can make us; that if he be not well able to make us perfect Amends, we will be ſatisfied with a ſmaller Recompence; and that if he can make us no Amends at all, we will freely forgive the Injury; neither doing him our ſelves, any Injury like to that which he has done us, nor ſo much as deſiring that any ſuch Evil may befal him; but that we will as truly deſire, and as heartily endeavour to procure his Eaſe, and promote his Welfare, as if he had never done us any Wrong at all.

But whenever we made Profeſſion of any thing which is good concerning our ſelves, we ought to do it with Modeſty and Humility, and a kind of Diſtruſt of our ſelves; it becomes us to have ſome Fear upon our ſelves, leſt our natural Self-love ſhould

ſhould make us think of our ſelves more highly than we ought to think, according to the Example of the *Apoſtle*, 1 *Cor.* iv. 4. *I know nothing by my ſelf, yet am I not hereby juſtified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord*; for we may ſee no Fault in our ſelves, our own Heart may abſolve us, and yet *God*, who (as the *Apoſtle* ſays, 1 *Joh.* iii. 20.) *is greater than our Hearts, i. e.* who knows what is within us, much better than we our ſelves do, may ſee that we are not ſo blameleſs as we think our ſelves; and therefore, I ſay, 'tis very reaſonable, whenever we declare any thing concerning our ſelves, that is good, (as we do in this Clauſe of the Lord's Prayer, when we ſay that *we do forgive thoſe that treſpaſs againſt us*;) that we ſhould do it with Modeſty and Diffidence of our ſelves, and accompany our Profeſſion of our own Sincerity, with a ſecret Wiſh or Petition, that God would be pleaſed to make us ſuch, (if we are not perfectly ſuch already,) as we do

declare and believe our ſelves to be.

An excellent Example of this Humility, and modeſt Diſtruſt of our ſelves, we have in *Mark* ix. 24. in the Man who brought his Son to our *Saviour* for Cure, who was poſſeſſed with a dumb Spirit; *I ſpake*, ſays he, *to thy Diſciples, that they ſhould caſt him out, and they could not*, ℣. 18. *But if thou canſt do any thing, have Compaſſion on us, and help us*, ℣. 22. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, If thou canſt believe, all things are poſſible to him that believeth*, ℣. 23. and then it follows, ℣. 24. *And ſtreightway the Father of the Child cryed out, and ſaid with Tears, Lord, I believe*; *i. e.* if this be the Condition of my Son's Cure, that I ſhould believe that thou art able to cure him, I have performed this Condition already; for I do firmly believe that thou art able to do it. And, in this, he doubtleſs ſpake the true Senſe of his Mind. But then, knowing how deceitful the Heart of Man is, and that 'twas poſſible his Faith might not be ſo good

as

as he himſelf took it to be, he immediately adds the following Word, *help thou mine Unbelief. Lord, I believe, help thou mine Unbelief.* 'Tis as if he had ſaid, I am not conſcious to my ſelf of any Weakneſs in my Faith, of any Mixture of Diſtruſt or Doubtfulneſs in my Belief of thy Power to cure my Son, but there may be Faults in me which I my ſelf cannot diſcern, and my Faith, perhaps, may not be ſo good as I take it to be; therefore, be thou pleaſed to help my Unbelief; *i. e.* if there be any Fault or Deficiency in my Faith, which I my ſelf do not diſcern, be thou pleaſed of thy great Goodneſs to forgive it, and by the Help of thy Grace to ſupply it.

And with ſuch Modeſty and Humility, and Diſtruſt of our ſelves, we ought always to utter theſe Words in Prayer to God, *forgive us our Treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us:* when we ſay, *as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us*; we declare that we do, we promiſe that we will for-

give thoſe who do us Wrong; and we can't ſay theſe Words with Sincerity, and in Truth, unleſs we do forgive them. Nay, indeed we not only mock God, but we likewiſe curſe our ſelves, every time that we repeat this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, if at the ſame time we are conſcious to our ſelves, that we bear Hatred and Malice in our Hearts, that we deſign or wiſh Evil to any Perſon who has done us Injury. But tho' we are in Charity with all the World, 'tis poſſible we may not be in ſuch perfect Charity as we ſhould be; 'tis poſſible there may be a Defect in our Charity, tho' we our ſelves do not diſcern it; 'tis poſſible that our Forgiveneſs of others may not be ſo full and hearty as it ought to be; and therefore 'tis very reaſonable that we ſhould always accompany this Profeſſion or Declaration of our Charity to, and Forgiveneſs of others, with earneſt Prayer to God, to ſupply the Defects of it by his Grace, and to make us grow and increaſe in it, every Day more and more.

This

This then is the full Meaning of this Petition; 'tis a Confeſſion of our Sins, joined with a Prayer for the Pardon of them; and 'tis a ſincere Declaration of our own Charity to others, joined with earneſt Prayer to God for the Increaſe and Perfection of it. So that this is the Senſe which we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to God, *Forgive us our Treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us*; 'tis as if we ſhould ſay.

" We are ſenſible, O God, we are ve-
" ry ſenſible, that we have in many
" things tranſgreſs'd thy holy and righ-
" teous Laws. Our own Conſciences
" witneſs againſt us, that we have left
" undone thoſe things which we ought
" to have done, and that we have done
" thoſe things which we ought not to
" have done; but we cannot call back
" our miſ-ſpent time; and to undo our
" former Works, we are not able: and
" how to make thee any Recompence
" for our manifold Treſpaſſes, we know
" not;

" not; and therefore we earneſtly de-
" ſire, and we alſo hope in thy Good-
" neſs, that thy Debt, which we are not
" able to pay, thou wilt freely forgive
" us; for this is what thou haſt com-
" manded us to do, to thoſe who treſ-
" paſs againſt us. Thou haſt made our
" Forgiveneſs of others the Condition of
" our obtaining Forgiveneſs from thee;
" and this Condition, as being indeed very
" equal and reaſonable, we approve of, and
" do fulfil. We here declare that we have
" dealt, and will deal ſo by others who
" offend or injure us, as we deſire to
" be dealt with by thee. We here de-
" clare that we have not, and will not
" demand, what we know they are not
" able to pay; that we do not, and will
" not avenge their Wrongs, but heartily
" and fully forgive them, even as we de-
" ſire to be forgiven by thee. And this
" Declaration we make before thee, in
" the Sincerity of our Hearts, and we
" hope there is nothing wanting on our
" Part, in our Forgiveneſs of others, to

" make

" make us capable of thy Pardon: but " if there be, and we cannot be ſure " there is not, then we humbly beſeech " thee to ſupply this Want, and to give us " thy Grace, that we may never forfeit " our Title to thy Pardon upon our Re- " pentance, by denying Pardon, by bear- " ing Hatred or Malice, or a Spirit of " Revenge to any who treſpaſs againſt " us.

And ſo much may ſerve for the Explication of this Petition.

But as all the former Petitions of the Lord's Prayer did inſtruct us in ſome Duties, ſo likewiſe does this. And this was the ſecond thing I propounded to do, in diſcourſing upon theſe Words, *viz.*

II. To ſhew what good Leſſons we are taught, what Duties we are inſtructed in, and oblig'd to, by our Uſe of this Petition; *forgive us our Treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us.*

And

And there are chiefly three things which we may learn from hence. 1. In general; that there is ſome Condition neceſſary on our Part, to qualify us to obtain Pardon of our Sins. 2. And more particularly that our forgiving others their Treſpaſſes againſt us, is a neceſſary Condition of obtaining our own Pardon. And, 3. Laſtly; we are hence likewiſe inſtructed in the Nature of that Forgiveneſs, which it is our Duty to grant to thoſe who treſpaſs againſt us.

1. I ſay, we may hence learn in general, that there is ſome Condition neceſſary on our Part, to qualify us to obtain Pardon of our Sins; *forgive us our Treſpaſſes, as we forgive*; or, *if we forgive*; or, (as 'tis expreſs'd in St. *Luke,*) *for we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us.* Here is a Condition plainly ſuppos'd to be done and performed by us, at the time when we put up this Petition for Pardon.

And

And the Truth is, God has no where promiſed that he will pardon our Sins abſolutely, without any Condition, or only upon the Condition of our asking Pardon; and what God has not promiſed to grant, we cannot ask with any Aſſurance of having it granted. For the only juſt Ground of a good Aſſurance, that our Prayers will be anſwered, is a Perſuaſion that the Matter of them is ſuch as is agreeable to the Goodneſs and Promiſes of God; according to that of the *Apoſtle*, 1 *Joh.* v. 14. *This is the Confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing, according to his Will, he heareth us.* Nay, indeed, to ask any thing of God which he has promiſed only upon Condition, without performing, ſo far as we are able, the Condition upon which he has promiſed it, argues a mean Opinion of God, and offers a direct Affront to him. For, by putting up ſuch a Petition, we do as good as ſay, that tho' indeed God ſeems reſolv'd not to grant us the thing which we ask, but upon certain Terms

Terms and Conditions, yet we hope to cheat him out of his Kindneſs by Flattery and fair Speeches, without performing the Conditions required by him.

Seeing then that Forgiveneſs of Sins will not be granted to us, but upon certain Terms and Conditions to be performed on our Part, it is our Duty to inform our ſelves what they are, and to endeavour, before we preſume to put up this Petition, to qualify our ſelves to receive the Pardon which we pray for.

Now the Conditions upon which only God has promiſed to pardon our Sins, are theſe three: (1.) Repentance; (2.) Prayer; and, (3.) Forgiveneſs of others.

And the ſecond of theſe Conditions we do actually perform, when we uſe the Lord's Prayer, or when we put up this ſame Petition in any other Form of Confeſſion and Supplication; and the third of them, *viz.* our Forgiveneſs of others, is, as I ſaid, a particular Duty which we are eſpecially taught in this Petition, and of which I ſhall diſcourſe ſomewhat by and

and by. So that the only thing now to be done, is to ſhew that Repentance is a neceſſary Condition of obtaining Pardon without which all our Prayers for it will be unavailable. And for the Proof of this, it may be ſufficient to cite two or three plain Teſtimonies of holy Scripture, ſuch as that of *Iſaiah*, Ch. i. ℣. 16. *&c.* where after the *Prophet* had declar'd at large the Unacceptableneſs of the Prayer and Sacrifices of the *Jews*, he propoſes this as the only Method to make them better accepted for the future, and available for their Pardon; *waſh you*, ſays he, *make you clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes; ceaſe to do Evil, learn to do well; ſeek Judgment, relieve the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the Widow. Come now, and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord; tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they ſhall be as white as Snow; tho' they be red, like Crimſon, they ſhall be as Wool.* And ſuch another Place, to this Purpoſe, is that in

Ezek. xviii. 21, 22. *If the wicked will turn from all his Sins that he hath committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die; all his Tranſgreſſions that he hath committed, they ſhall not be mentioned unto him; in his Righteouſneſs that he hath done, he ſhall live.* And ſuch another is that in *Prov.* xxviii. 13. *He that covereth his Sins ſhall not proſper, but whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them, ſhall have Mercy.* Upon theſe Terms Pardon was promiſed by God to Sinners in the Old Teſtament; and upon the ſame, and no other, it is promiſed in the New, as may be ſeen (to name no other Places,) in *Acts* iii. 19. *Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out.*

Seeing therefore we can obtain Pardon upon no other Terms than our Repentance, 'tis to no Purpoſe to pray for it, ſo long as we neglect to perform this

this Condition. And therefore from this Petition in the Lord's Prayer, wherein we are taught to pray for Pardon, we are likewiſe plainly inſtructed, that it is our indiſpenſable Duty, by a hearty Repentance for all our Sins, to qualify our ſelves to receive that Pardon which we pray for.

And the leaſt that can be accounted Repentance, for any Sins, of any kind, which we have been guilty of, is an hearty Sorrow for what we have done amiſs, and a ſincere Reſolution and Endeavour not to commit them again; this is the only Notion of true Repentance which the Scripture teaches; and therefore, unleſs we do thus truly repent us of our Sins, 'tis to no manner of purpoſe to put up this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, *forgive us our Treſpaſſes*; for, till then, it will not be heard and anſwered.

But yet even theſe, I mean a Sorrow for our paſt Sins, and the forbearing to repeat them, are not a ſufficient Repen-

tance for all Sins; for where it can be done, we muſt do more than this, I mean, we muſt undo our former Works, we muſt ſet to right what we have put out of Order; and this is what may be done in moſt of the Sins of Injuſtice towards Men. The Damage we have done to our Neighbour, we may repair; the Goods we have wrongfully taken or detain'd from him, we may reſtore; and for any other Injury which we have done him, we may make him Satisfaction. And this is what muſt be done, if we can do it, before we can ſay this Petition of the Lord's Prayer; *i. e.* before we may preſume to beg Pardon of God for any ſuch Sins. And ſo we are plainly taught by our *Saviour* himſelf, in *Matth.* v. 23. *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and there remembreſt that thy Brother hath ought againſt thee, leave there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy way; firſt be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* But,

2. As

2. As from this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, wherein we are taught to beg Pardon of our Sins, not abſolutely, but conditionally, as we forgive others; we learn in general that there is ſomewhat to be done on our Part, to qualify us for God's Pardon; ſo we hence learn more particularly, that it is our neceſſary Condition to qualify us to pray for the Pardon of our own Sins againſt God, that we ſhould exerciſe the ſame Mercy and Compaſſion towards Men who have treſpaſſed againſt us, which we our ſelves do beg of God.

This is plainly implied in the Petition it ſelf; forgive us our Treſpaſſes, *as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us*; but is more clearly and expreſſly taught in the two laſt Verſes of the Text, where our *Saviour* himſelf gives the Reaſon of his adding that Clauſe to the Petition, *as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us. For*, ſays he, *if ye forgive Men their Treſ-*

paſſes, your heavenly Father will alſo forgive you; but if ye forgive not Men their Treſpaſſes, neither will your Father forgive your Treſpaſſes.

By the laſt of theſe Verſes it plainly appears, that our Forgiveneſs of others, is a neceſſary Condition of obtaining Forgiveneſs of our own Sins; *If ye forgive not*, &c. And by the firſt Verſe it ſhould ſeem that this is the only Condition required of us; ſo that if we do but perform this, we need not be concerned about any thing elſe; for ſo our *Saviour* ſays, *If ye forgive*, &c.

But for the right underſtanding of this, it is to be conſider'd, that it is very uſual, in holy Scripture, to attribute one thing as an Effect, to another thing as its Cauſe; which yet has not in it ſelf ſufficient Power to produce the Effect which is attributed to it, and ſo is only a partial Cauſe of it, which could not produce the Effect without the Concurrence of other Cauſes; and yet is ſo much a Cauſe too, that the other Cauſes without

without that would be as inſufficient, as that would be without the others. We have ſeveral Inſtances of this in the beginning of this Sermon upon the Mount, wherein our *Saviour*, in thoſe Sentences commonly called the *Beatitudes*, pronounces a Bleſſedneſs, and promiſes the Reward of Heaven, firſt to *the poor in Spirit*, then to the *Mourners* for Sin, then to *the Meek*, then to thoſe who *hunger after Righteouſneſs*, then to *the Merciful*, then to *the pure in Heart*, then to *the Peace-makers*, and at laſt to thoſe who are *perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake*; and yet 'tis certain that the Promiſes of the Goſpel are not made to any one ſingle Grace or Virtue, but to all in Conjunction.

And ſo 'tis here; Forgiveneſs of Injuries done to us, tho' it be a neceſſary Condition of our own obtaining Pardon from God, is not the only one. And this, I ſuppoſe, might be the Reaſon why, when our *Saviour* had ſpoken thoſe Words in the 14th ℣. *If ye forgive*

Men their Treſpaſſes, your heavenly Father will alſo forgive you. By which we might have been led into a Miſtake, and have been induced to think, that Mercifulneſs was the *only* Qualification requiſite to intitle us to the divine Mercy. He immediately adds thoſe other Words, in the 15th ℣, to prevent that Miſtake; wherein he explains the foregoing Words, and plainly declares his Meaning to be, not, that if we forgive others, our Sins, without any other Condition or Qualification, will be forgiven us; but only that all other Conditions and Qualifications will be inſufficient without this; that this is at leaſt as neceſſary a Condition as any other. *If ye forgive not Men their Treſpaſſes, neither will your Father forgive your Treſpaſſes.*

And as this is a neceſſary Condition of our obtaining Pardon, ſo it is plainly a very equal Condition; for it is but reaſonable that we ſhould do as we would be done unto; that when we ask

ask for Pardon our ſelves, we ſhould freely grant it to thoſe who ask it of us.

And the Reaſonableneſs of this Condition is moſt excellently ſhewed by our Lord himſelf, in *Matth.* xviii. 23, *&c.* particularly upon theſe two Accounts.

(1.) Becauſe God, whom we have ſinned againſt, and whoſe Pardon we ask, is our Sovereign Lord, infinitely ſuperior to us, and we are his Creatures, his Slaves, his Vaſſals; but Men are all (in a manner) upon equal Terms with one another, for they are all Fellow-Servants of the ſame Lord; and therefore their Treſpaſſes againſt one another, (tho', as to the Matter of them, they were the ſame with our Treſpaſſes againſt God; yet) being committed only againſt Equals, would not be ſo heinous and unpardonable as our Sins are againſt him: for it is plainly a much greater Fault in a Subject, to affront or ſtrike his King, than it is to affront

or ſtrike his Fellow-Subject. And,

(2.) Becauſe our Offences againſt God are really greater in themſelves, than any Man's Offences are or can be againſt us: ſo that altho' we ſtood upon the ſame Terms, and on the ſame Level with Almighty God, which we do with one another, yet it would not be reaſonable in us, to deſire of him to pardon us our great Tranſgreſſions, unleſs we alſo can find in our Hearts to pardon others their lighter Treſpaſſes againſt us.

Both theſe Reaſons, I ſay, ſhewing how very fit and equitable it is, that we ſhould ſhew to others the like Mercy which we deſire of God, are excellently ſet forth by our *Saviour*, in that Place, in the Parable of a certain great King, who reckoning with his Servants, found one who owed him *ten thouſand Talents*; [a] *i. e.* almoſt two Millions of

[a] *Vid.* Marg. of gr. Bible. A Talent is 750 Ounces of Silver; 10000 Talents, at 5 *s.* 2 *d. per* Ounce, is 1937500 *l.*

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our Money; which great Debt nevertheleſs, foraſmuch as the poor Man was not able to pay it, the King frankly forgave. But mark what follows, at *V.* 28. This ſame Man goes forth, and meets with one of his Fellow-Servants, who owed him but an hundred Pence [b], *i. e.* little more than 3 *l.* of our Money; a very Trifle, in Compariſon with the great Debt which had been juſt before forgiven him; (for an hundred Pence is not ſo much in Proportion to ten thouſand Talents [c], as one Peny of our Money is to two thouſand Pound;) and as ſoon as ever he ſees him, he takes him by the Throat, ſaying, Pay me what thou oweſt; upon which the other fell down at his Feet, beſeeching him but only to have a little Pa-

[b] A Penny is the eighth Part of an Ounce, *ergo* 100 Pence, 12 O. $\frac{1}{2}$. *i. e.* at 5 *s.* 2 *d. per* Ounce, amounts to 3 *l.* 4 *s.* 6 *d.*

[c] 100 Pence is to 10000 Talents, as one Penny to 2508 *l.* 12 *s.* 3 *d.* 10000 Talents is 602067 times as much as 100 Pence.

tience

tience with him, and he would pay him: but he would not, but went immediately, and caſt him into Priſon. And ſee what Judgment the King paſſed upon him for it, at the 32d, &c. Verſes; *Then his Lord, after he had called him, ſaid unto him, O thou wicked Servant, I, i. e.* I who am thy Lord and Maſter, who had more Power over thee, than thou hadſt over him, *I forgave thee all that Debt*, that great Debt of ten thouſand Talents, *becauſe thou deſiredſt me, and ſhould'ſt not thou alſo have had Compaſſion on thy Fellow-Servant, even as I had Pity on thee? i. e.* was there not good Reaſon then, that when thy Fellow-Servant owed thee only ſuch a ſmall Sum as an hundred Pence, (not the ſix hundredth thouſandth part of the Sum which I forgave thee;) and when he only deſired time, and would, 'tis like, have been able to pay thee, if thou hadſt given him time; (was there not good Reaſon, I ſay,) that thou

ſhould'ſt

ſhould'ſt ſhew the like Compaſſion to him, (for the ſame it would not have been, but infinitely beneath it,) which I had ſhewed thee. And then it follows, ℣. 34. *And his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the Tormentors; and ſo likewiſe*, ſays our *Saviour*, at the 35th ℣. (applying the Parable to this very Caſe;) *ſo likewiſe ſhall my heavenly Father do alſo unto you, if ye from your Hearts forgive not every one his Brother their Treſpaſſes.* And this ſame Argument is very well urged by the Son of *Syrach*, [*Ecclus.* xxviii. 1, &c.] in theſe Words, *He that revengeth, ſhall find Vengeance from the Lord; and he will ſurely keep his Sins in Remembrance. Forgive thy Neighbour the Hurt that he hath done unto thee, ſo ſhall thy Sins alſo be forgiven when thou prayeſt. One Man beareth Hatred againſt another Man, and doth he ſeek Pardon from the Lord? He ſheweth no Mercy to a Man which is like himſelf, and doth he*

he ask Forgiveneſs of his own Sins? But,

3. Laſtly; from this Petition we not only learn the Neceſſity of Forgiveneſs of Injuries, but we are alſo in good Meaſure inſtructed in the Nature of that Forgiveneſs which it is our Duty to grant to thoſe who treſpaſs againſt us; for we pray to God to forgive us, *as we forgive them.* But now,

(1.) What we here deſire of God, is, that he would forgive us all our Sins, the great as well as the ſmall; or indeed thoſe rather than theſe: for tho' no Sins are indeed ſmall, yet ſome are more heinous than others; and it is for our great and crying Sins, which we are moſt in fear of the divine Vengeance, and for which we are moſt earneſt in asking Forgiveneſs. We therefore, if we hope or expect to have theſe greateſt Sins forgiven us, ought likewiſe to forgive the greateſt Injuries which are done to us by others.

(2.) We

(2.) We pray for the Forgiveneſs of our Sins, tho' they are many; and we pray, or at leaſt we ſhould pray every Day for the Forgiveneſs of them; and we hope that tho' our Iniquities (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſays, *Pſal.* xl. 12.) are *more than the Hairs of our Head*, we ſhall yet obtain Remiſſion of them.

The Mercy, therefore, which we hope and expect from God, ſhould be a Pattern to us in ſhewing Mercy to others. Our Patience ſhould never be tyred out, we ſhould never be weary of forgiving. And ſo we are taught by our *Saviour* himſelf, *Luke* xvii. 4. *If thy Brother treſpaſs againſt thee ſeven times in a Day, and ſeven times in a Day turn again to thee, ſaying, I repent; thou ſhalt forgive him*; and that by ſeven times our *Saviour* meant not a ſmall, not any limited Number of times, appears plainly by his own Anſwer to St. *Peter*, *Matth.* xviii. 22. For when St. *Peter* had put the Queſtion to him, how often it was his Duty to forgive

give his Brother, whether until ſeven times; our Lord anſwered him, *I ſay not unto thee, until ſeven times, but until ſeventy times ſeven.*

(3.) Laſtly; the Pardon which we deſire of God is full and effectual; we pray that he would clearly blot out all our Iniquities, and free us from all the Puniſhment thereof.

Such therefore ſhould our Pardon be, of thoſe Treſpaſſes which are committed againſt us; it ſhould be a full and perfect Pardon; we ſhould forgive not only outwardly, but from the Heart; we ſhould not bear the leaſt Degree of Grudge or Malice in our Minds, towards thoſe whom we forgive, but ſhould be as perfectly reconcil'd to them, as if they had never offended us.

I conclude all, therefore, with thoſe Words of the *Apoſtle*, Coloſſ. iii. 12, 13. *Put on, as the Elect of God, holy and beloved, Bowels of Mercies, Kindneſs, Humble-*

Humbleneſs of Mind, Meekneſs, Long-ſuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any Man have a Quarrel or Complaint againſt any; even as Chriſt forgave you, ſo alſo do ye.

Lead

Lead us not into

TEMPTATION, &c.

EXPLAIN'D.

DISCOURSE VIII.

Lead us not into Temptation, but, &c. Explain'd.

MATTH. VI. 13.

And lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.

IN the *Lord's Prayer* (as I have formerly obſerved) are Three principal Parts, The Preface, The Body of the Prayer, and The Concluſion.

The Preface conſiſts of a Solemn Invocation of Almighty God, whom we are taught to Stile, *Our Father* which is in *Heaven.*

The Body of the Prayer conſiſts of Six diſtinct Petitions.

And the Concluſion contains a Doxology, or a Solemn giving Glory to God; *Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever.*

And of the Preface, and of Five of the Petitions I have already ſpoken; the Sixth Petition is what I am now to Diſcourſe of; *Lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.*

In Diſcourſing on which, I ſhall obſerve the ſame Method that I have before done in Diſcourſing on the other Five, *i. e.*

I. I ſhall explain the Meaning of the Petition, or ſhew what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to God, *Lead us not into*, &c. And,

II. I ſhall ſhew what good Leſſons we may learn, what Duties we are taught and inſtructed in, by our Uſe of this Petition.

I. I ſhall explain the Meaning of the Petition, and ſhew what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter theſe Words in Prayer to GOD, *Lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.*

And this Petition conſiſts of Two Parts, not exactly the ſame, and yet not much differing in Senſe from each other. 1. *Lead us not into Temptation*; and, 2. *Deliver us from Evil.*

1. *Lead us not into Temptation.* For the underſtanding of which we muſt enquire, (1.) What is meant by *Temptation*; and, (2.) How *God* may be ſaid *to lead us into it.*

(1.) What is meant by *Temptation.* And,

1. The Word *Temptation* moſt properly ſignifies nothing elſe but only a Trial or Experiment made of any Perſon, to ſee of what Temper and Diſpoſition he is, and how he is morally qualified. And thus God tempted *Abraham*, when he laid upon him that hard Command of Sacrificing his only Son *Iſaac*; by which God made a full Trial of his Faith and Obedience, and declared himſelf fully ſatisfied therewith; as the Angel ſpeaking in the Name of God, and of God after the manner of Men, teſtifies, *Gen.* xxii. 12. *Now I know that thou feareſt God, ſeeing thou haſt not withheld thy Son, thine only Son, from me.*

And thus all Afflictions and Adverſities that befal the Body are *Temptations: i. e.* They are Trials of our Faith and Patience. *My Brethren*, ſays St. *James*, *count it all Joy when ye fall into divers Temptations*; *i. e.* when ye are perſecuted and afflicted.

Jam. i. 2.

And thus, likewiſe, Proſperity is alſo a Temptation; for 'tis a Trial of our

So-

Sobriety, and Humility, and Truſt in God.

Thus indeed all the different States and Circumſtances that any of us are in, are *Temptations*; *i. e.* They are ſuch Trials as God ſees good to make of our Faith and Virtue; not to ſatisfy himſelf (for he knows before-hand what we will do) but to ſatisfy our ſelves and others, how we ſtand affected towards him, and to make the Righteouſneſs of that Judgment which he will paſs upon us, either to Salvation or Damnation, evident to all the World.

Now againſt theſe and all ſuch Temptations as theſe in general, we ought not to pray; for they are the neceſſary Condition of our Living here in this World; our whole Life here being nothing elſe but a State of Trial, and conſequently of Temptation; ſuch as it was neceſſary we ſhould be put into, in order to make us capable of either Reward or Puniſhment. For there would be no Virtue if there were no Trial of Virtue, and no Vice

if there were no Temptation or Inducement to it; it being hardly to be ſuppoſed that any Man that believes a future State, or has any Senſe of Religion, would chuſe to commit Wickedneſs, only for its own Sake, without any Proſpect of Profit or Pleaſure, or ſome other worldly Advantage. And if we manfully reſiſt theſe Temptations that we are aſſaulted with, our Reward in Heaven will be great, proportionally to the Power and Strength of thoſe Temptations that we meet withal and overcome. And therefore St. *James* (as I obſerved before) in the firſt Chapter of his Epiſtle, at the 2d Verſe, bids us to *count it all Joy when we fall into divers Temptations; knowing this, that the Trying of our Faith worketh Patience.* And ver. 12. *Bleſſed,* ſays he, *is the Man that endureth Temptation; for when he is tried he ſhall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promiſed to them that love him.*

2. Therefore, becauſe ſometimes we do not abide thoſe Trials which God makes

makes of us, but ſink under them, and are overcome by them, (therefore, I ſay) the word *Temptation* is ſometimes, and indeed moſt commonly, us'd in a bad Senſe, for ſuch an Allurement and Inducement to Sin, as does actually prevail with us to commit the Sin; or for ſuch a Trial of us, as is made with a Deſign that we ſhould commit the Sin which we are tempted to.

And thus the *Devil* tempts us; that is, he allures and invites us to commit Sin; he lays Baits for us of a delicious Taſte, or finely gilded over, which he hopes we will catch at, and take in, and with them ſwallow down alſo the Hook that was cover'd over therewith. And thus to pray that we may not fall into Temptation, or be *led into Temptation*, is the ſame Thing in Effect, as to pray that we may not fall by the Temptation, or that we may not fall into the Sin that we are tempted to, or that we may not be enſnar'd and taken Captive by the Devil.

But

But taking the word *Temptation* in this Senſe, *God* does never tempt us; we we can't conſequently, taking the Word in this Senſe, pray that *God* would *not lead us* into *Temptation*; for he never deſigns our Sin or Fall by any Trial that he makes of us, but only our Improvement in Grace and Virtue. And thus we are taught by St. *James*, Jam. 1. 13. *Let no Man ſay, when he is tempted, i. e.* when he actually falls into any Sin, (let him not ſay) *I am tempted of God*; *i. e.* I was ſeduc'd and betray'd thereinto by God; for *God cannot be tempted with Evil, neither tempteth he any Man.*

But now, if it be ſo, that the firſt Sort of the Temptations before ſpoken of; *i. e.* the Trials of our Faith and Obedience, are ſuch as we ought not to pray againſt, but rather to rejoice at, as has been ſhewn already: And if the laſt Sort of Temptations, thoſe which are deſign'd to enſnare us, are ſuch as God doth not uſe upon us, for he never deſigns to allure or invite us to commit Sin; He *tempteth no Man,*

Man, as St. *James* ſays; How is it that we are taught in this Petition to pray to *God* that *He* would *not lead us into Temptation?* For all God's Temptations are deſign'd for our Good, for the Exerciſe of our Virtue, and the Increaſe of our Reward: And the other Temptations, thoſe which are deſign'd for our Hurt, are the Devil's Temptations, and not God's. This therefore was the next Thing I was to give an Account of; *Viz.*

(2.) How *God* may be ſaid *to lead us* into *Temptation.*

And the Caſe is this; Tho' it be the Devil that tempts us to Sin, he could do nothing without God's Permiſſion: And ſuch is his Subtilty and Power, and ſuch is our Eaſineſs and Weakneſs, that his Temptations muſt needs prevail againſt us, unleſs God be pleas'd by his Grace to aſſiſt and enable us to overcome them. So that whenever God ſuffers the Devil to tempt us above our Strength, or by ſuch a ſtrong Temptation as can hardly

but prevail; or when he does not furniſh us with ſupernatural Strength to reſiſt ſuch Temptations; In any of all theſe Caſes, *God* may, in ſome Senſe, be ſaid *to lead us* (becauſe he, who if he pleaſed could eaſily hinder it, ſuffers us to be led) *into Temptation.*

This therefore is what, in this Petition, we pray that God would not do, that he would not ſo lead us into Temptation; *i. e.* that He would never ſuffer us to be tried above our Strength; or that if the Temptation that he ſuffers us to be aſſaulted with, be ſuch as would prevail againſt our Weakneſs, he would be pleas'd ſo to ſtrengthen us by his Grace, that we may be able to reſiſt it.

And this is a Petition which we have good Warrant to put up to God, becauſe it is no more than God, who is Faithful, has promis'd, 1 *Cor.* x. 13. *God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above what ye are able; but will with the Temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

But

But now if this be God's Promiſe, and he, being *faithful*, will certainly make it good, not to *ſuffer* us to be tempted *above what we are able*; here riſes another Difficulty; *viz.* what Need there is of our Praying for that which God will certainly do, whether we pray for it or no.

But this Difficulty will be eaſily remov'd, by conſidering theſe Two Things.

1. That this Promiſe of God, that he will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able, or that he will grant us ſufficient Grace to withſtand and overcome the Temptations we are aſſaulted with, is, like all the other Promiſes of the Goſpel, a Conditional Promiſe, to entitle us to which there is ſomething to be done by us: And particularly, that Prayer to God is the Condition to be perform'd on our Part, to give us a Right and Title to this Promiſe of God; that Prayer to God is the Condition of our obtaining ſufficient Grace, according to that of our *Saviour*, Matth. vii. 7. *Aſk, and it ſhall be*

be given you; by which he plainly intimates, that unleſs we do ask we may go without it: And ſo St. *James* ſays expreſsly, *Jam.* iv. 2. *Ye have not, becauſe ye ask not.*, And yet in this Caſe our Sin and Deſtruction may be of our ſelves, becauſe we might, for the asking, have had ſufficient Grace to avoid them. But then it may be conſider'd further,

2. That if there were no Condition Pre-requiſite for the obtaining of ſufficient Grace; if we might be ſure of it without our asking, by virtue of this Promiſe; yet this, as well as any other Right or Privilege which we once had a Title to, may be forfeited by our Misbehaviour.

And this may be, and without Doubt oftentimes is, the Caſe here. God at firſt ſuffers us not to be tempted above our Strength, and this he does of his meer Goodneſs, without any Condition on our Part: And ſo long as we make good Uſe of that Grace which is afforded us, ſo long our Title to a ſufficient Meaſure of it

it holds good. But if we at any Time, wilfully and deliberately chuſe the Commiſſion of a Sin, while we had ſufficient Strength to reſiſt the Temptation, we thereby forfeit all our Right and Claim for the future. And the ſame Goodneſs which gave us ſufficient Grace at firſt, and which would ſtill have continued to do the ſame, if we had been careful to co-operate with it, may not give us ſufficient Grace every Time afterwards that we are tempted; but rather, our ſinning wilfully, when we had ſufficient Grace given us to keep us from ſinning, may juſtly provoke God to leſſen or withdraw that Grace which we have ſo much abus'd; according to that Threatning of our *Saviour*, *From him that hath not, ſhall be taken away, even that which he hath.*

And indeed beſides; If God ſhould continue to us the ſame Meaſure of Grace afterwards that he had communicated to us before, (which yet is more than can reaſonably be hop'd) 'tis to be conſider'd never-

nevertheleſs, that ſuch a Meaſure of Grace as was before ſufficient, may not be ſufficient afterwards; becauſe that Grace that was before given, might be proportion'd only to our natural Weakneſs; and by every wilful Sin we render our ſelves weaker and weaker, and conſequently needing a greater Meaſure of Grace to keep us from falling; and tho' God may be thought to be (if we may be allow'd ſo to ſpeak) under ſome ſort of Obligation in Equity, ſo to aſſiſt our weak Nature as that we ſhould not at firſt neceſſarily fall into a Sin, he can't be thought oblig'd upon the ſame Account to increaſe his Grace when we come to have Need of a greater Meaſure of it than we had at firſt; becauſe that we have now need of more Grace than we had then, is our own Fault only, who have weakened our Nature by Evil Cuſtom: And there is no Reaſon to expect, that God's Grace ſhould abound according as our Sin does abound.

Now

Now this is in Truth the Caſe; we had ſufficient Strength once, either by Nature or by Grace, (and 'tis no Matter now by which) to have withſtood thoſe Temptations to Sin which God did then ſuffer us to be aſſaulted with; it was our own Fault, therefore, that we then fell, when we had Strength to ſtand; and ever ſince that firſt Fall, we have fallen very frequently; (this we own'd in the former Petition, when we prayed for Forgiveneſs of our Treſpaſſes;) And therefore having by our own Sin forfeited all Claim to the Divine Grace, there is great Reaſon that we ſhould now beg it as a Favour, ſince we can't claim it as a Due, that God would not lead us into Temptation; *i. e.* That either he would not ſuffer us to be tempted above our Strength, that is, not above thoſe Remains of the Strength of Nature that are ſtill left to us; or elſe, in Caſe he ſees fit to permit us to be aſſaulted by more violent Temptations, that he would be pleas'd to give us ſuch a Supply of his Grace, as may

be ſufficient to ſtrengthen our Weakneſs, and to enable us to reſiſt and conquer them.

Thus we pray that God would not lead us into Temptation, *i. e.* that in this State of Trial and Temptation, which we are now put into by the Divine Providence, he would be pleas'd to have Conſideration of our Weakneſs; *viz.* both of the Weakneſs of our frail Nature, and alſo of that greater Weakneſs which we have contracted by our former Sins, and never ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able. *Lead us not into Temptation.* But it follows in this ſame Petition,

2. *But deliver us from Evil,* the Meaning of which Words I am now to ſhew.

And there are Three Significations of the Word *Evil,* all which are conſiſtent together, and agreeable to the Scope and Deſign of the Place, and therefore however we may approve any one of them more than another, I do not ſee why we ſhould exclude any of them. For,

1. By

1. By the *Evil* that we here pray to be delivered from, we may underſtand the *Evil* of *Sin*, which is ſometimes in Scripture called *Evil*; as in *Habak.* i. 13. *Thou art of purer Eyes than to behold Evil.* And taking the Word in this Senſe, this Clauſe of the Petition, *Deliver us from Evil*, will be the ſame in Senſe with the former, *Leed us not into Temptation*; For then, what we here pray for will be, that God would ſo aſſiſt us by his Grace, that we may not fall by any Temptations that we are aſſaulted with. Or,

2. By *Evil*, we may underſtand the *Evil* of *Puniſhment*; which is likewiſe in Scripture ſometimes expreſs'd by that Word, as in *Jer.* xviii. 8. In which Verſe we have an Inſtance of the Word *Evil*, uſed both in this Senſe, and in the former Senſe of it. *If*, ſays God, *that Nation againſt whom I have ſpoken, turn from their Evil*, (*i. e.* from the Evil of their Ways) *I will repent of the Evil*, (*i. e.* of the Evil of Puniſhment) *which*

I had thought and threatned to do unto them. And ſo it is likewiſe ſaid in *Jonah* iii. 10. That *God repented of the Evil that he ſaid he would do unto* Niniveh, *and he did it not*; *i. e.* He did not bring that Deſtruction upon them which he had ſent *Jonah* to denounce againſt them. And taking the Word *Evil* in this Senſe, this Clauſe of the Lord's Prayer will be much the ſame in Senſe with the Fifth Petition, *Forgive us our Treſpaſſes*; For then our Sins are forgiven us by God, when the juſt Puniſhment of them is remitted, when we are deliver'd from that Evil which we had deſerv'd to ſuffer. Or,

3. *Laſtly*; By *Evil* we may underſtand the *Evil One*, *i. e.* the *Devil*, who is ſometimes in Scripture ſo called; as particularly in 1 *John* iii. 12. *Not as Cain, who was of that wicked One*, ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ, the ſame Word that is uſed here, *Deliver us from Evil*, ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ, from the *Evil One*. And *he* may well be called, the

the *Evil One*, becauſe he was the firſt Author of all the Sin that has been in the World, and of all the Miſery that has been, or ever will be cauſed thereby.

Now theſe Three Senſes of the Word *Evil*, are (as I ſaid before) all conſiſtent with, and ſubordinate one to the other, ſo that I think they may *all* be well enough underſtood to be deſign'd in this Place, when we are taught to ſay, *Deliver us from Evil*; For by the *Evil* of *Sin*, we render our ſelves obnoxious to the *Evil* of *Puniſhment*, and particularly to that greateſt of all Puniſhments, to be *led Captive* by the *Devil* here, and to be eternally *tormented* by him hereafter.

The Senſe then that we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter the Words of this Petition, is this, as if we ſhould ſay; "We know, O Lord, that we are "ſet in the midſt of many and great "Dangers, by reaſon of the various "Temptations that we are ſubject to in "this Mortal Life, which we can't reſiſt "but by thy Help; and therefore we

" pray thee, without whoſe Appoint-
" ment or Permiſſion, nothing can hap-
" pen to us, that either thou would'ſt
" not ſuffer us to be tempted ſtrongly,
" or elſe that thou would'ſt be pleas'd
" to grant us ſuch a large Supply of thy
" Grace, that we may not fall by any
" Temptation, how ſtrong ſoever it be;
" but that being by thy Help preſerv'd
" from all Sin, we may alſo clearly
" eſcape the Puniſhment thereof, both in
" this World and in the next. *Lead us*
" *not into Temptation, but deliver us from*
" *Evil.*

And now, having explain'd the Meaning of this Petition, I proceed in the Second Place, according to the Method before laid down,

II. To ſhew what good Leſſons we may learn, what Duties we are taught and inſtructed in by our Uſe of this Petition. And,

1. *As* we *pray*, *ſo* we ought to *practiſe*; This is a general Rule of Duty; we ſhould never pray for any Thing, but we ſhould at the ſame Time endeavour, by the Uſe of all lawful Means that are in our Power, to procure the ſame to our ſelves; For God is no Friend to Sloth and Lazineſs; he has no where promis'd to help thoſe who will do nothing for themſelves.

Beſides, *Help* is but *Help*, It enables thoſe that work to perform the Work that they ſet themſelves to, but it does not do their Work for them; It aſſiſts them that endeavour to do their Work, but it would be more than Help and Aſſiſtance if it did all the Work by it ſelf, without their Concurrence and Co-operation.

Being therefore here taught to pray to God, that we may not be led into Temptation, it is plainly our Duty not to run our ſelves into Temptation, but on the contrary, to uſe all the prudent Means we can to avoid the ſame.

And this Duty we are taught by our *Saviour* himſelf, at the 29th and 30th Verſes of the foregoing Chapter. *If thy Right Eye offend thee pluck it out, and caſt it from thee, --- and if thy Right Hand offend thee cut it off, and caſt it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy Members ſhould periſh, and not that thy whole Body ſhould be caſt into Hell.*

'Tis in vain, 'tis indeed too late, to pray that we may not be led into Temptation, or that we may not fall by the Temptation, when we our ſelves have choſen it; for by wilfully running into Temptation, we conſent to our own Fall; by chuſing what we foreſee will be the Occaſion of our ſinning, we give Conſent to the Sin that is occaſion'd thereby, and fully contract the Guilt of the Sinful Action, even before the Action it ſelf is done. Nay, by chuſing the Temptation we contract the Guilt of the Sin, although by ſome other Reſtraint or Impediment accidentally coming in our Way,

we ſhould be hindred from doing the Act it ſelf; ſo that whenever we give our Conſent to that which will probably be the Cauſe or Occaſion of our committing a Sin, we do then fall into Temptation, and we do then fall by the Temptation; and when we our ſelves are our own Tempters, 'tis no better than trifling with God, or mocking of him, to pray, that *he would not lead us into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.*

2. From our Uſe of this Petition in the Lord's Prayer, we are further taught, that 'tis not only our Duty to avoid Temptations as much as we can, but likewiſe to fore-arm our ſelves as well as we can againſt thoſe Temptations which we are liable to in this mortal State, and which by all our Care and Caution we cannot wholly avoid. For 'tis a vain Thing to pray to God for any Good, either Spiritual or Temporal, which we our ſelves will be at no Pains to procure to our ſelves. And therefore we are taught by

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our *Saviour* not only to pray, but likewiſe to *watch* againſt Temptation, *Matth.* xxvi. 41. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation.* And *Mark* xiii. 33. *Take ye Heed, Watch and Pray,* and *Verſe* 37. *What I ſay unto you, I ſay unto all, Watch.* And to this ſame Purpoſe we are alſo exhorted by the Apoſtles; by St. *James,* Jam. iv. 7. *Reſiſt the Devil;* by St. *Peter,* 1 Pet. v. 9. *Be ſober, be vigilant, becauſe your Adverſary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about ſeeking whom he may devour; whom reſiſt, ſtedfaſt in the Faith.* And by St. *Paul,* Eph. vi. 11. *Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to ſtand againſt the Wiles of the Devil.*

And indeed, if we ſet our ſelves with all our Strength to reſiſt Temptations, we may then reaſonably hope for ſuch an Aſſiſtance of the Divine Grace as will enable us to overcome them; but if we our ſelves give Ground, while we are able to ſtand, there is great Reaſon to fear that God will withdraw his Grace from us,

when he ſees we do not uſe it and improve it as we ought to do; according to that ſevere, and yet moſt juſt Threatning of out *Saviour*, before-cited, *Matth.* xiii. 12. *Whoſoever hath, to him ſhall be given, and he ſhall have more Abundance; but whoſoever hath not,* (*i. e.* makes not uſe of what he has) *from him ſhall be taken away, even that which he hath.*

3. Laſtly, From the Place which this Petition has, from the Order in which it lies in the Lord's Prayer; from its ſucceeding the foregoing Petition, wherein we had begg'd Forgiveneſs of our Sins, and from its being immediately ſubjoin'd thereunto, we may learn, That there is no Ground to hope for Forgiveneſs of our paſt Sins, without a firm Reſolution and a ſincere Endeavour to reform our Lives. For unleſs this were neceſſary to obtain a full Remiſſion of our paſt Sins, we might have put an End to our Prayer with that Petition; becauſe having our Sins forgiven, we ſhould by that alone, be capable

capable of, and entitled to, all the Promiſes of the Goſpel, and ſo ſhould not need to be concern'd for any Thing further. According to that of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Pſalm* xxxii. 1, 2. *Bleſſed is he whoſe Unrighteouſneſs is forgiven, and whoſe Sin is covered. Bleſſed is the Man unto whom the Lord imputeth not Iniquity.* Being therefore here taught, after we had begg'd Pardon of our former Sins, ſtill to continue our Petition; and to beg yet farther for Divine Grace and Help to enable us to reſiſt and overcome Temptations for the Time to come, it hereby plainly appears, that we are not capable of this Bleſſedneſs that the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks of, without a Reformation of our Lives; and conſequently, that Remiſſion of Sins, wherein that Bleſſedneſs does conſiſt, will not be granted to us on any other Terms. And this is agreeable to the whole Tenor of the Bible; *Repent and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out*; ſo the Apoſtles preach'd, *Acts* iii. 19. *And repent of this thy Wickedneſs, and pray God, if perhaps the*

the Thought of thine Heart may be forgiven thee, was the good Advice of St. *Peter* to *Simon* the Magician; *Acts* viii. 22. *firſt* he was to *repent*, and *then* he was to *pray for Pardon*; for a Prayer for Pardon before, or without Repentance, the *Apoſtle* knew would be ineffectual: And to them who obſerve the Method there preſcrib'd by the *Apoſtle*; *i. e.* who both repent, and alſo pray for Pardon, a moſt ſure Promiſe of Forgiveneſs is made; *Iſaiah* i. 16, 17, 18. *Waſh you, make you clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes, ceaſe to do Evil, learn to do well, ſeek Judgment, relieve the oppreſſed, judge the Fatherleſs, plead for the Widow. Come now, and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord, tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they ſhall be white as Snow, tho' they be red like Crimſon, they ſhall be as Wool.* And to the ſame Senſe is that of the *Wiſe Man*, Prov. xxviii. 13. *He that covereth his Sins ſhall not proſper, but whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them ſhall have Mercy.*

And

And now I have done with the Second Part of the Lord's Prayer, which conſiſts of Petition to God.

The Third and laſt Part of it is the Concluſion, contain'd in the latter Part of the 13th Verſe: *For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever,* Amen.

But I think it will be beſt to defer diſcourſing on that to ſome other Time.

For thine is the KINGDOM, &c. EXPLAIN'D.

DISCOURSE IX.

For thine is the Kingdom, &c. Explain'd.

MATTH. VI. 13.

---- *For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever.* Amen.

IN the Lord's Prayer there are, (as I have formerly noted) Three Principal Parts; 1. The Preface; 2. The Body of the Prayer, and 3. The Concluſion; and of

the Two firſt of theſe I have already ſpoken.

The Third Part of the Prayer, or the Concluſion, of which I am now to diſcourſe, contains *Firſt* a Doxology, or Solemn giving Glory to God, *Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever*; And *Secondly*, An Expreſſion of our full Approbation of, and hearty Conſent to, the whole foregoing Prayer, in the Word, *Amen.*

I ſhall now ſpeak ſomewhat of each of theſe, in the ſame Method which I have hitherto obſerv'd in Diſcourſing of all the foregoing Clauſes of this Prayer; *i. e.* 1. I ſhall explain their Meaning, and ſhew what Senſe we ought to have in our Minds when we utter theſe Words: And, 2. I ſhall ſhew what good Leſſons we are taught, what Duties we are inſtructed in by the Uſe thereof.

And in this Method I ſhall firſt diſcourſe of the Doxology, or giving Glory to God; *For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever.*

Which

Which Words may be underſtood either, *Firſt*, as a Recognition or Acknowledgment of the Greatneſs and Majeſty of God; Or, *Secondly*, aſſigning ſome ſpecial Reaſons inducing us to ask, and which we hope will likewiſe induce God to grant the ſeveral Requeſts which had been before put up to him.

1. I ſay, Theſe Words may be underſtood as a ſimple Doxology; *i. e.* Only as a Recognition or Acknowledgment of the Greatneſs and Majeſty of God; Thus;

Thine is the Kingdom; *i. e.* "We "heartily acknowledge thy Supreme Do- "minion over us, and the whole World; "we adore and worſhip thee, as the "Great King, the Sovereign Lord of "all."

And, *thine is the Power*; *i. e.* "We "own likewiſe, and humbly adore that "infinite Power whereby thou art able "to govern the World, and to order all "the Affairs of it according to thine own

" Pleaſure, notwithſtanding any Oppo-
" ſition that is made to thy Will, by
" Evil Men, or Devils, or any other
" Created Being."

And *thine is the Glory*; *i. e.* " We give
" thee the Glory of thy Greatneſs and
" Power, and of all the Things that
" thou doſt, and of all the Good that
" thou workeſt in us, or beſtoweſt upon
" us."

And *Laſtly*; We hereby acknowledge that God always was, and ever will be, the ſame that he is at preſent; that he changeth not, but ever was, and ever will be, as Great, as Powerful, and as Glorious as now; that he is infinitely and eternally ſuch, *the ſame Yeſterday, to Day, and for ever. Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever.*

And, thus underſtood, this Doxology at the Concluſion of the Lord's Prayer, is the ſame in Senſe with that larger Form of Praiſe and Thankſgiving that was us'd by *David*, and is recorded in

1 *Chron.*

1 *Chron.* xxix. 10. *&c. And David ſaid; Bleſſed be thou, Lord God of Iſrael, our Father, for ever and ever; Thine, O Lord, is the Greatneſs, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory, and the Majeſty; For all that is in the Heaven and in the Earth, is thine; Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as Head above all. Both Riches and Honour come of thee, and thou reigneſt over all, and in thine Hand is Power and Might, and in thine Hand it is to make great, and to give Strength unto all; Now therefore, Our God, we thank thee, and praiſe thy glorious Name. Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory for ever; i. e.* "We humbly acknowledge, "and reverently adore the Greatneſs of "thy Kingdom, the Mightineſs of thy "Power, and the Glorioufneſs of thy "Majeſty, and the Eternity of theſe and "all other thy Infinite and Glorious Per-"fections." But,

2. We may alſo, as I ſaid, underſtand theſe Words, as aſſigning ſome ſpecial Reaſons inducing us to ask, and which we hope will likewiſe induce God to grant the ſeveral Requeſts that we had before put up to him. And the Connexion that is made between theſe Words, and the foregoing Petitions by the Word, *For*, *For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory*, ſeems to favour this Interpretation. And thus underſtood, the Senſe of them will be this.

For thine is the Kingdom; *i. e.* "We "therefore beg theſe Things of thee, be- "cauſe thou art our King; for thou art "the Sovereign Lord of the whole World; "and we are thy Subjects, who have our "whole Dependence upon thee, and "muſt receive all that we want from thy "Riches and Fulneſs. Upon which Ac- "counts it is befitting us to ask of thee, "and it is ſuitable to thy Prerogative to "grant our Requeſts.

And thine alſo *is the Power*; *i. e.* "We "therefore put up our Prayers to thee, "becauſe

" becauſe we know that Thou, being of
" infinite Power, art able to grant all
" that we deſire; And we alſo hope that
" thou wilt do it, becauſe the granting
" theſe our Requeſts will be an Expreſ-
" ſion and Manifeſtation of the Greatneſs
" of thy Power."

And *thine* alſo *is the Glory*; *i. e.* " By
" making known our Wants to thee, and
" humbly craving a Supply thereof from
" thy Bounty, we give thee the Glory
" that is due unto thy Name. And this
" alſo is a farther Ground of Hope to us,
" that thou wilt grant our Requeſts, be-
" cauſe to thee of Right will belong
" the Glory and Praiſe of all that we
" have, and of all that we do; ſeeing
" we have nothing but from thy
" Bounty, and can do nothing but by
" thy Help."

And *thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory for ever*; *i. e.* " As
" it now is, ſo it ever was, and ever
" will be; *Thy Kingdom* is an *everlaſt-*
" *ing Kingdom*, and thy Dominion en-

" dureth throughout all Ages; And *thy* " *Power* is unalterable, not capable of " Increaſe, becauſe infinite; nor poſſible " to be leſſen'd, becauſe ſuperior to all " other Power; And *thy Glory* alſo is " Eternal; And becauſe thou changeſt " not, we have an entire Confidence, " and a ſure Truſt in thee, that thou both " canſt and wilt, both now, and at all " Times, hear the Prayers that we put up " to thee".

But theſe Two Senſes of this Clauſe of the Lord's Prayer, though they are ſomewhat different, yet are not at all diſagreeing to each other; ſo that they may both be well enough meant by us when we utter theſe Words. And then the full Senſe that we ought to have in our Minds, when we ſay this Concluſion of the Lord's Prayer, will be, as if we ſhould ſay.----

" And now that we have put up our " Petitions to thee for what we want, " it is but fit that we ſhould alſo render " thee the Praiſe and Thanks that are " thy Due. We acknowledge therefore

that

" that thou art a great King, whom we " ought to Worſhip with the lowlieſt " Reverence; and we own that thy " Power is infinite, and are therefore " ſure that thou can'ſt grant what we " have deſired; And we confeſs that " thy Glory is above all, and we there- " fore deſire that thou may'ſt be glorified " in all the good Things that thou be- " ſtoweſt upon us; And laſtly, we ac- " knowledge that thy Kingdom and " Power and Glory are for ever, that " they are Eternal, and immutable; and " therefore we do, and ſhall at all times, " put our whole Truſt in thee, becauſe " we acknowledge that thou can'ſt never " fail us."

And this Concluſion of the Lord's Prayer is fruitful of good Inſtruction, as well as were all the foregoing Clauſes of it;

And what Inſtructions they are that we receive from thence, was the next Thing I was to ſhew. And,

1. In

1. In general; from this Doxology's or Form's of Praiſe being added by our Lord himſelf to that Form of Prayer which he has taught us to uſe, and according to which as a Pattern, we are to compoſe all our own Prayers, we may learn, that it is our Duty always to accompany our Petitions to God for the Mercies we want, with Praiſes and Thankſgivings to him for the Mercies we have received, and with joyful Acknowledgments of his Majeſty, Greatneſs and Bounty. According to thoſe Directions given by the *Apoſtle*, 1 *Theſ.* v. 17, 18. *Pray without Ceaſing, and in every Thing give Thanks*; and *Phil.* iv. 6. *In every Thing, by Prayer and Supplication with Thankſgiving, let your Requeſts be made known unto God.*

2. And more particularly.

From the *Firſt* Clauſe of this Doxology; *For thine is the Kingdom*, we are put in Mind that it is our Duty in all Things to ſubmit our ſelves to the Will of God, and

and to reſign our ſelves to his Diſpoſal, whom we here acknowledge to have the Sovereign Dominion over all.

From the *Second* Clauſe of it, *Thine is the Power*, we are farther taught, that it is our Duty in all our Straits and Difficulties, to ſeek for his Grace and Succour to direct and ſupport us, and in all our Dangers and Wants, to rely upon his All-ſufficiency to deliver and relieve us; according to that of the *Apoſtle*, in the Place juſt before cited. *Be careful for nothing, but in every Thing by Prayer and Supplication, ---- Let your Requeſts be made known unto God.*

And from the Third Clauſe of it, *Thine is the Glory*: We are further taught to direct all our Actions to his Glory, to whom we here acknowledge that all Glory is due; according to that of the ſame *Apoſtle*, in 1 *Cor.* x. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.*

And laſtly, From that Eternity which we here acknowledge in all the Divine Attri-

Attributes and Perfections, when we ſay that his Kingdom, and Power, and Glory are *for ever*, we are taught to worſhip him continually, to praiſe him evermore, and to give Divine Honours to none beſides him; becauſe He is God from Everlaſting to Everlaſting, and beſides Him there is no other God, and his Glory he will not give to another.

There is only one Word of the Lord's-Prayer, that now remains to be ſpoken of, viz. *Amen*.

And this is an *Hebrew* Word, ſignifying, *Truly*, *verily*, or the like: And it is a Phraſe often us'd by our *Saviour* at the Beginning of his Speech, to engage the Attention and Credit of his Hearers to what he was about to ſay, Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, which we tranſlate, *Verily I ſay unto you*: And in the Goſpel of St. *John* the Word is always doubled, Ἀμὴν, Ἀμὴν, *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you; i. e.* of a Truth I ſay unto you, or, in good Truth it is ſo as I ſay. And that this is the true Meaning of the Word, appears from ſeveral Places

Places in St. *Luke*'s Goſpel, parallel to ſome others in St. *Matthew*, or the other Evangeliſts, where he uſes the *Greek* Word ἀληθῶς, the proper Signification of which is, *Indeed*, *Truly*, or *Of a Truth*, where the other Evangeliſts had uſed the *Hebrew* Word, *Amen*. Thus in *Luke* ix. 27. we read thoſe Words of our *Saviour*; *I tell you*, ἀληθῶς, *of a truth*, *that there be ſome ſtanding here*, *which ſhall not taſte of Death*, *till they ſee the Kingdom of God*; but in *Matth.* xvi. 28. and *Mar.* ix. 1. where this ſame Paſſage is related, the *Hebrew* Word, Ἀμὴν, is retain'd; Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, *Verily*, *I ſay unto you*. So again, in *Luke* xii. 44. 'tis ſaid, Ἀληθῶς, *Of a truth I ſay unto you*, *he will make him Ruler over all that he hath*; but in *Matth.* xxiv. 47. 'tis, Ἀμὴν, *Verily*, *I ſay unto you*, *he will make him Ruler over all his Goods*. And the ſame may be obſerv'd again, in *Luke* xxi. 3. where our Lord, giving his Judgment of the poor Widow, that had caſt her Two Mites into the Treaſury, ſays, Ἀληθῶς, *Of a Truth*, *I ſay unto you*, *that this*

this poor Widow hath caſt in more than they all: But in *Mar.* xii. 43. the *Hebrew* is retain'd, Ἀμὴν, *Verily I ſay unto you, this poor Widow hath caſt in more than they all.*

This therefore being the proper Meaning of the Word, *Amen*, it being an Adverb of Affirming, the Deſign of Adding it at the Concluſion of any Diſcourſe, is to *affirm* all that had been ſaid before; we thereby declare and teſtify our Approbation thereof, and Conſent thereto: And it denotes ſuch a Sort of Approbation and Conſent, as, conſidering theNature of the foregoing Diſcourſe, was proper to be given to it.

And therefore when we repeat the *Creed*, we ſay *Amen*, at the End of that; by ſaying which Word there, we grant the Truth of all the Articles before rehears'd, and declare our Belief thereof; There, *Amen*, ſignifies, *So it is, this is the true Faith*; or, *All this I ſtedfaſtly believe.*

And ſo, when at the End of every one of thoſe Curſes, which were order'd

to be pronounced upon Mount *Ebal*, *Deut.* xxvii. the People were taught to ſay, *Amen*, the Deſign was, that by ſaying that Word they ſhould teſtify, that thoſe Curſes, upon ſuch as did the Things there ſpoken of, were juſt and deſerved, and ſuch as all thoſe wicked Doers might reaſonably expect ſhould befal them.

And of the like Uſe is the Word, *Amen*, in the *Commination* appointed in our Liturgy to be read upon the Firſt Day of *Lent*; the Deſign of it (as the Church her ſelf teaches in the Exhortation at the Beginning of that Office) is, that the Congregation *being admoniſh'd of the great Indignation of God againſt Sinners, may be warned to flee from thoſe Vices for which*, by their ſaying, *Amen*, at the End of every Sentence, *they affirm with their own Mouths the Curſe of God to be due.*

And ſo St. *Paul*, Rom. i. 25. after he had ſaid of the Heathens, that *they worſhipped and ſerved the Creature more than the Creator, who is bleſſed for ever*, adds, *Amen*, meaning thereby further

ther to confirm that laſt Clauſe, *who is bleſſed for ever*; Amen, *i. e.* he is Bleſſed for ever; And he adds the ſame Word again upon a like Occaſion, to almoſt the ſame Form of Speech, in the ixth Chapter of that Epiſtle, at the 5th *Verſe*, only that as in the Words before cited, he had ſpoken of God the Father, or the Firſt Perſon in the ever Bleſſed Trinity, he here affirms the ſame of the Second Perſon, our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, of whom he here ſays, that *he is over all, God bleſſed for ever; whoſe are the Fathers*, (*i. e.* they were *Jews*) *and of whom as concerning the Fleſh, Chriſt came, who, i. e.* which *Chriſt, is over all, God bleſſed for ever*; and then he immediately adds the Word, *Amen*, in further Affirmation of that laſt Clauſe, wherein he had aſſerted the Eternal Divinity of the Son; that it might not ſeem to have been written caſually, or without good Thinking; *Chriſt is over all, God bleſſed for ever*, Amen; *i. e. ſo indeed it is, Chriſt* is indeed *God bleſſed for ever*. In both theſe Texts, the Word, *Amen*, has the Force of a Repetition in one Word, of

what had been ſaid juſt before in more Words.

And of the like Uſe and Force is the Word *Amen*, when 'tis added at the End of the *Creed*, or of a *Prayer*.

When we ſay *Amen* at the End of the *Creed*, or whenever elſe we make Profeſſion of our Belief of any divine Truth, we mean by adding that Word to repeat over again in ſhort, all that Profeſſion of our Faith or Belief, which we had before made in ſeveral Words, or in ſeveral Sentences. The ſaying *Amen* there, is equivalent to the ſaying over again all that had been ſaid before; it is a freſh Declaration of our Conſent thereto, and our Belief thereof.

But when the Word *Amen* is joined to a *Prayer*, or is added at the End of a Prayer, as it is here, it then ſerves to expreſs our Wiſh or Deſire, that the whole Matter of the Requeſt to which it is ſubjoin'd, may be granted, or our good Hope that the ſame will be granted. Thus in 1 *Kings* i. 36. when *David* had declared his Intention that *Solomon* ſhould ſucceed

him in the Kingdom, *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoiada* anſwer'd the King, and ſaid, *Amen, the Lord God of my Lord the King ſay ſo too.* Where by this Word *Amen* he plainly meant to expreſs *his Deſire* that it might be ſo as the King had ſaid. And thus alſo in *Jerem.* xxviii. 6. when the Prophet *Hananiah* had propheſy'd falſly, that the Veſſels which *Nebuchadnezzar* had carried from *Jeruſalem* to *Babylon*, ſhould in a ſhort Time be brought back again, the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſaid, *Amen*; and yet he knew at the ſame Time that the Prophecy was falſe; he could not therefore be thought by ſaying that Word to give his Aſſent to the Truth of it; but nevertheleſs becauſe the Matter of the Prophecy was good, and what the Prophet *Jeremiah* would have been as glad as any of them all might be fufilled, he ſaid, *Amen* to it; *i. e.* he declared his own Wiſh and Deſire that it might be ſo as *Hananiah* had ſaid, altho' he knew that it would not be ſo. And ſo he himſelf explains the Word; *Jeremiah* ſaid, *Amen, The Lord do ſo, the Lord perform thy Words which thou*

haſt propheſied. And ſo in *Revel.* xxii. 20. when our Lord had ſaid, *Surely I come quickly*, the Apoſtle St. *John*, for himſelf, or in the Name of the whole Chriſtian Church, immediately adds, *Amen*, *Even ſo*, *Come Lord Jeſus*; *i. e.* May it be ſo as thou haſt promiſed.

And of the like Uſe is this Word *Amen*, when it is added at the End of thoſe Benedictions wherewith moſt of the *Epiſtles* in the *New Teſtament* are concluded.

If therefore the Prayer at the Concluſion of which, *Amen* is added, be ſpoken by one, and the *Amen* be ſpoken by another, as it is commonly in our Publick Prayers, when the Miniſter only ſpeaks the whole Prayer, and all the People at the End of it ſay *Amen*; then they by ſaying *Amen*, ſignify their Conſent to, and their Concurrence with, the whole Prayer that had been utter'd before by the Miniſter; and their Meaning is the ſame as when they ſay in the Litany, *We beſeech to hear us good Lord:* But if the *Amen* be ſaid by the ſame Perſon that

ſpeaks the Prayer; as when we ſay *Amen* to our own Cloſet and Private Prayers, the *Amen* is then a Repetition in one Word of all that had been ſaid before in all the Clauſes of the foregoing Prayer: 'Tis a freſh Breathing forth of all thoſe pious Deſires or Affections of the Mind, that had been before more largely expreſſed.

When therefore we ſay *Amen* at the End of the *Lord's-Prayer*, whether the Prayer be ſpoken by our ſelves or another, the Senſe we ſhould have in our Minds is this.

If we refer it to the *Invocation*, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, we ſhould mean, "So it is, 'tis our Father in Hea-" ven, whom we put up our Prayers to, " and no other.

If we refer it to the *Petitions*, we ſhould mean, "So be it, the Lord fulfil " all our Petitions.

Or if we refer it to the *Doxology* immediately preceeding, *Thine is the Kingdom*, *and the Power*, *and the Glory*, *for ever*, we ſhould mean, as before in the Invocation, "So it is, thine indeed is the " King-

" Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glo-
" ry for ever.

But when this Word, *Amen*, is added at the End of a Prayer, the Matter whereof we are ſure is good and agreeable to God's Will, (as moſt certainly the Matter of this Prayer is, which was taught us by our Lord himſelf) then both the foregoing Senſes of the Word may well be join'd together, *So it is*, and *ſo be it*; then by the Word, *Amen*, we ſhould not only ſignify the Concurrence of our own Wiſhes, but likewiſe our aſſured Hope that the ſame will be granted to us.

And this is the Explication that is given of this Word in the *Church Catechiſm*, where, after the Scholar had briefly given the Meaning of the foregoing Clauſes and Petitions of the Prayer; This and this, I deſire of God in this Prayer; he is taught to ſay, *And this I truſt he will do of his Mercy and Goodneſs, thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and therefore I ſay Amen, ſo be it.*

And ſo much for the Meaning of the Word, *Amen*.

But from the Uſe of this Word, as well as of all the foregoing Clauſes in this Prayer, we are alſo inſtructed in our Duty. Two Things eſpecially there are, which we may learn from hence.

1. Being here taught by our Lord himſelf to ſay, *Amen* at the End of Prayer, to teſtify thereby our Conſent thereunto, it plainly appears from hence, that the Prayers which are at any Time put up to God in Publick, ought to be expreſs'd in ſuch a Language, and in ſuch a Stile, as may be eaſily underſtood by all thoſe that are to join therein. For if they do not underſtand what is ſaid, they can't approve of it, they can't give a rational Conſent thereto, they can't ſay *Amen* to it.

It is highly expedient therefore, nay, it is abſolutely neceſſary for the Edification of the Church, that the Publick Prayers, which are deſigned for the Uſe of all, ſhould be ſuited to the Capacities of all; *i. e.* ſhould be as plain, as eaſy, as familiar as is poſſible; that not only all high Flights,

Flights, and Rhetorical Figures and Flouriſhes ſhould be therein carefully avoided, but likewiſe all Words that are not of very eaſy Meaning and of common Uſe.

In a word, the Publick Prayers ſhould be ſuch as the Prayers of our Church are, the Words common, the Stile eaſy, the Sentences ſhort, and the whole Phraſe and Compoſure ſuited to the Capacities of the Meaneſt.

And this is not only a Commendation of our Liturgy in particular, that it is ſo form'd and contriv'd, that the Meaneſt of the Congregation may underſtand our Prayers, and ſay *Amen* to them; but it is in general an Advantage of premeditated or ſet Forms of Prayer, above thoſe which are conceived *Extempore*, that he that pens a Prayer for Publick Uſe, may take Time to ſtudy Plainneſs and Perſpecuity, which he that prays *Extempore* cannot do. And indeed I am apt to think that one Reaſon why ſome Perſons, who are not of the quickeſt Apprehenſions, do more admire theſe *extempore Prayers* of others than they do the ſtated Prayers

of the Church, is becauſe they do leſs underſtand them; for People are generally moſt apt to admire that which they do leaſt underſtand. But above all, it is manifeſtly moſt abſurd and ridiculous, that the Publick Prayers, in which all are to join, ſhould be put up, as they are in the Church of *Rome*, in an unknown Tongue, in a Language not underſtood, perhaps, by One in Twenty, it may be, not by One in an Hundred of the whole Congregation. The Folly and Ridiculouſneſs of which Practice is moſt evidently ſhewed in the xivth *Chapter* of the 1ſt *Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians*, by ſeveral Arguments, and among others by this, that no Man can wiſely and rationally ſay *Amen*, to a Prayer utter'd by another in an unknown Tongue, at the 15th and following Verſes. *What is it then, I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the Underſtanding alſo: I will ſing with the Spirit, and I will ſing with the Underſtanding alſo. Elſe when thou ſhalt bleſs with the Spirit, how ſhall he that occupieth the room of the Unlearned ſay Amen, at thy giving*

giving of Thanks, ſeeing he underſtandeth not what thou ſayeſt? For thou verily, (*i. e.* thou thy ſelf, who underſtandeſt the Language which thou ſpeakeſt in, thou) *giveſt Thanks well; but the other* (*i. e.* He who underſtads it not) *is not edified.* But,

2. When we ſay *Amen* at the End of any Prayer, or other Addreſs to God, it is ſuppoſed, not only that we underſtood what went before, but that we minded it, and gave good Attention to it; for when we ſay *Amen* to any Thing, we thereby give our Conſent to it, and declare our Approbation of it: And how can we approve of, how can we conſent to a Prayer that is ſpoken, if we do not attend to what is ſaid?

This therefore is another Duty that we are plainly inſtructed in by this Word, *Amen*; *viz.* when we are at Prayer, to keep our Mind to our Buſineſs, to attend diligently to what we are about, to avoid as much as is poſſible all wandring Thoughts in Prayer, to be duly affected with

with every Clauſe and Sentence of that Prayer which we either ſpeak our ſelves, or which is ſpoken by the Miniſter in the Congregation in our Names, and to have ſuch Thoughts and Deſires in our Minds throughout the whole Office, as the Words we are then ſpeaking ſeem to import we have. For unleſs we do thus attend to, and are thus affected by what we ſay, our Service will be nothing elſe but Lip-Worſhip, and will be neither acceptable to God, nor profitable to our ſelves. For of all thoſe that *draw near to God with their Mouths, and honour him with their Lips, while their Heart is removed far from him*, we are told by the *Prophet*, that *their Worſhip of God is vain.*

If. xxix. 13. comp. Matth. xv. 8.

But if, as every Clauſe and Sentence of the Prayer is uttered, we go along with it in our Minds, and give ſuch a Conſent either of Approbation or Deſire, as is proper to be given thereto, then the ſingle Word, *Amen*, at the End of all, being utter'd with Fervency and true Devotion, will fully comprehend in it all the Senſe of the whole foregoing Prayer, and we

ſhall

ſhall pray over again in one devout Breath, as much as we prayed before in the whole Office. And ſuch *an effectual fervent Prayer*, (as St. *James* calls it) we may be ſure will *avail much* with God. For *this* (as St. *John* ſays) *is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his Will he heareth us; And if we know that he hear us whatſoever we ask, we know that we have the Petitions that we deſired of him.* 1 Joh. v. 14, 15.

And now having gone through every Part of the Lord's Prayer by its ſelf, explaining the Meaning thereof, and declaring the Duties that we are thereby inſtructed in and oblig'd to, I ſhall only obſerve Two Things to you concerning the Fulneſs, Perfection, and Excellency of this Prayer, and ſo conclude. And,

1. From what has been ſaid it is eaſy to obſerve that the Lord's Prayer is a compleat Pattern of Prayer, there being in this ſhort Prayer every Thing that can be reckon'd a Part of Prayer. For,

(1.) In

(1.) In Prayer we are to *acknowledge* and *adore* the *Divine Excellencies and Perfections*; and this we do here: *Firſt*, In the Preface to the Prayer, when invoking God, we ſtile him our Heavenly Father, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, and then in the Concluſion of it, when we acknowledge that *his is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory for ever.*

(2.) In Prayer we are humbly to *thank* our Heavenly Father for all the Expreſſions of his Goodneſs to us; *Continue in Prayer*, ſays the *Apoſtle*, *and watch in the ſame with Thankſgiving*. And this Part of Prayer, *Thankſgiving*, is included likewiſe in the Preface, when we acknowledge that God is *our Father*, *i. e.* that he bears us a Fatherly Affection, and that we have experienced his Fatherly Kindneſs to us; and this ſame is likewiſe again exercis'd and expreſs'd in the Firſt Petition, *Hallowed be thy Name*; that Phraſe being, (as I have formerly noted) like thoſe commonly in Uſe among us, *God*

be

be praiſed, Bleſſed be God, and the like; by which, though they are expreſs'd in the Form of a Wiſh or Petition, yet what we mean is, actually to give Thanks and Praiſe to God; and ſo it may be underſtood there, *Hallowed be thy Name; i. e.* we do hallow thy Name, we praiſe and bleſs thee for thy Goodneſs.

(3.) In Prayer we are humbly to *requeſt* of God the good Things that we want; this is the chief Subject of Prayer, this is what it has its Name from; for Prayer and *Petition*, are Words of the ſame Signification; and this is plainly the chief Subject of the Lord's Prayer; the whole Body of it, all but the Preface and Concluſion, being in its primary Meaning, *Petition* to God for ſuch Things as we have need of (and indeed for all Things that we have need of) both for our Souls and Bodies. But then,

(4.) *Laſtly*; It is not fit that vile and polluted Sinners, as we all are, ſhould dare to approach the Preſence of God, or

preſume

preſume to offer up any Requeſt to him, without an humble *Acknowledgment of our Vileneſs and Unworthineſs*; It becomes not Sinners to ask any Thing of God without *confeſſing* their Faults, and ſorrowfully owning that they are unworthy to receive the good Things that they ask'd: And this is *Confeſſion*, which therefore ought to make a Part in all our Addreſſes to God; and ſo it does here: For when we ask God Forgiveneſs (as we are taught to do in the Fifth Petition, *Forgive us our Treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us*) ſuch a Requeſt contains, by plain Implication, an Acknowledgment that we are Sinners; for if we had no Sin, we ſhould need no Pardon, and if we did not think our ſelves Sinners, we ſhould not think it needful to beg Pardon.

From all which therefore it plainly appears, that this is a moſt compleat Form or Pattern of Prayer, that there is nothing eſſential to Prayer wanting in it.

2. What

2. What may be further obſerv'd and inferr'd from all the Diſcourſes which I have made upon this Prayer, as to the admirable Excellency and Perfection of it; is, that it is ſo fram'd and contriv'd, as to ſerve both for an *Expreſſion* of our *Devotion* towards God, and for an *Inſtruction* to our ſelves; that at the ſame Time, and by the ſame Words, by which we are taught what to requeſt of God, we are alſo inſtructed in our own Duty, and ſtrongly excited to it; upon which Account the frequent Uſe of it muſt needs be of ſingular Benefit and Advantage to us.

You may, I ſuppoſe, have heard it ſaid, that no Perſon that is a Witch, can repeat the Words of the Lord's Prayer throughout; that if ſuch a Perſon be put to repeat it, there will be always ſomewhat miſtaken in the Repeating it, or ſomewhat omitted. I will not warrant the Truth of this Saying or Obſervation, becauſe, as I have had no Experience of it, ſo neither can I ſee any Reaſon for it.

But

But this I think I may ſay with more Certainty of Truth, and with more Reaſon; That no wicked Man whatſoever, continuing in his Wickedneſs, can ſay this Prayer, nor indeed any one Sentence or Clauſe of it, with good Attention and fervent Devotion; and that every Good Man ſo ſaying it, muſt needs by natural Efficacy, as well as by the Divine Grace and Bleſſing be rendred better thereby.

1. I ſay, that a wicked Man, continuing in his Wickedneſs, can't ſay this Prayer, nor indeed any one Sentence or Clauſe of it, with good Attention, and fervent Devotion; he can't have ſuch inward Affections of Mind towards God, as the Words of this Prayer do expreſs, nor an hearty Deſire of thoſe Things which he ſeems to requeſt of God; becauſe ſuch devout Affections and holy Deſires are directly contradictory to, and utterly inconſiſtent with the Love and Practice of Sin.

For how can he preſume ſo much as to call upon God in Prayer, who in Works denies him? Or how can he with Holy

Devotion call God his *Father*, who has ſold himſelf to the Devil to work Wickedneſs, and continually exerciſes himſelf therein? *For whoſoever is born of God ſinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himſelf pure, and that wicked one toucheth him not*, as the *Apoſtle* ſays. 1 John v. 18.

How can he ſay to God, with true Devotion, *Hallowed be thy Name*, who diſhonours him in his whole Life? How can he be thought ſeriouſly and heartily to deſire that the Holy Name of God may be ſanctified by all, who is himſelf by wicked Oaths, and horrid Blaſphemies, continually prophaning and polluting it? Again,

How can he pray heartily that *the Kingdom of God may come*, and be eſtabliſh'd in the World, who will not give up himſelf to be rul'd and govern'd by him? Muſt not his Heart give his Tongue the Lye, while he ſays with his Mouth, *Thy Kingdom come*, and yet knows himſelf to be in his Heart with thoſe wicked ones ſpoken of by *Job*, who *ſay unto God* Job xxi. 14.

God depart from us, for we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways: What is the Almighty that we should serve him, and what Profit should we have if we pray unto him?

Again; we are taught in this Prayer to say, *Thy Will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven*; But how can a Man say this with true and fervent Devotion, who continually opposes and resists the Divine Will, who will neither submit to the Providence of God, nor obey his Precepts; who is *abominable and disobedient, and to every good Work reprobate?*

Again; *Give us* (we are further taught to say) *this Day our Daily Bread*; Now in the *Matter* of this Petition, there is indeed nothing but what a very wicked Man may agree to; for, He may desire as earnestly, nay, he does commonly desire more passionately, the Things of this Life than the Good Man does: But then as to the *Manner* of desiring them, as to the craving them of God, he can no more utter this Petition with true Devotion than he can any of the former; because

becauſe he knows that he does not depend upon God for them, nor expect them from his Bleſſing, but only from his own Wit and Induſtry; for if he look'd for them from the Divine Bleſſing, he would not ſeek them, as now he does, in ſuch Ways as God has forbidden, *i. e.* by Fraud and Injuſtice, Extortion and Oppreſſion.

And as little can he join, with true and hearty Devotion, in the Petition that follows; *Forgive us our Treſpaſſes*; For though Pardon of Sins be what he greatly wants, and what, if he has any Senſe of Religion in him, he can't but ſecretly wiſh God would grant; yet we can't with true Devotion, and with ſuch Aſſurance of being heard as is requiſite to render our Prayers availing, put up any Petition to God, the Matter of which we our ſelves are ſenſible is highly unreaſonable. And what can be more unreaſonable than this? What can be more unfit for God to grant, or more prophane and preſuming in us to ask, than this is? *viz.* That he would be pleas'd to grant Pardon to an

unrepenting Sinner. For to ask this of God, is juſt the ſame as it would be to deſire him to abrogate all his Holy and Righteous Laws, or to grant us a Licenſe to tranſgreſs them.

And as little can ſuch an one ſay, with a true Spirit of Devotion, and an hearty Concurrence of his own Deſire, *Lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil*; for, as the *Apoſtle* ſays, *Every Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own Luſt, and enticed*: And this is what the wicked Man chuſes to be; he gives himſelf up to his own Hearts Luſts, and delights to follow his own wicked Imaginations; ſo that to pray againſt Temptations is to pray againſt himſelf; and he can't be ſuppoſed to join heartily in this Petition, without ſuppoſing what is plainly impoſſible; *viz.* that a Man can at the ſame Time love and hate, chuſe and refuſe, delight in and abhor the ſame Things.

And laſtly, When ſuch an one ſays, *For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever*; ſeeming thereby to acknow-

acknowledge the infinite and adorable Perfections of the Divine Nature, and to intend to give him the Praiſe and Glory that is his due, How can it be ſuppoſed that his Heart ſhould go along with his Words, when at the ſame Time that he ſays theſe Words, it plainly appears by the whole Courſe and Tenor of his wicked Life, that he neither owns the Sovereign Dominion of God, nor dreads his Power, nor ſeeks his Glory?

Thus it appears that a wicked Man, continuing ſuch, can't ſay this Prayer, nor indeed any Clauſe or Sentence of it, with good Attention and fervent Devotion; that he can't have ſuch inward Affections of Mind towards God as the Words of this Prayer do expreſs, nor an hearty Deſire of thoſe Things which he ſeems to requeſt of God: Or if he had, he would quickly be a better Man than he is: And this was what I further ſaid, *viz.*

2. That every good Man, every Time he uſes this Prayer, with good Attention and fervent Devotion, muſts needs by natural

tural Efficacy, as well as by the Divine Grace and Bleſſing, be rendred better thereby.

For every Time that he calls upon God as his *Father*, he is reminded of that filial Love and Duty which he owes to him.

Every Time that he prays heartily that *God's Name* may be *hallowed*, his own Mind muſt needs be filled with an awful Reverence towards him.

Every Time that he ſays with a true Spirit of Devotion, *Thy Kingdom come*, he is admoniſhed to *ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs*.

Every Time he ſays, if he ſpeaks the Words with Attention and Fervency, *Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven*; he is taught his own Duty, *viz.* humbly to reſign himſelf to God's Pleaſure, and with all Readineſs and Chearfulneſs to ſet himſelf to obey his Commands.

Whenever he deſires of God his *daily Bread*, he exerciſes an Act of Truſt in God's Providence, and is warn'd not to uſe any ſuch Means for the procuring the good Things of this Life, as he can't in

Reaſon expect, or ſo much as deſire God's Bleſſing upon.

When he begs of God *Forgiveneſs* of his *Sins*, the Devotion wherewith the Words of this Petition ſhould be accompanied, muſt be grounded upon the Teſtimony of his own Conſcience that he is truly penitent, and that he does exerciſe ſuch Mercy and Charity towards thoſe that have offended him, as God has made the Condition of his own receiving Pardon.

When he deſires of God *not to be led into Temptation*, if his Deſires are hearty, it can't be ſuppoſed that he ſhould wilfully run himſelf into thoſe Dangers which he earneſtly prays he may avoid or be deliver'd from.

And laſtly, when he gives Glory to God, by a ſolemn Recognition and Acknowledgement of the Divine Excellencies and Perfections, ſaying, *Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever*; if he be at all affected by what he ſays, it muſt needs be, that every Time he devoutly repeats this Doxology, his Love

Love to God muſt be increaſed, his Faith ſtrengthned, and his Obedience confirm'd.

Such then being the Excellency of this Prayer, and ſuch the Benefits and Advantages of our religiouſly and devoutly uſing it; what remains, but that we pray unto the ſame Bleſſed *Jeſus*, who in Compaſſion to our Infirmities has taught us how to pray, that he would be pleas'd to ſend alſo his holy Spirit to help our Infirmities in Prayer; that ſo we may always ſpeak theſe holy Words which he has taught us, with Attention and fervent Devotion, and thereby be made capable of his gracious Promiſe, who has ſaid, that *whatſoever we ſhall aſk the Father in his Name he will do for us, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

Joh. xiv. 13.

And to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, Three Perſons and One God, be given, as is moſt due, all Honour, Glory, and Praiſe, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

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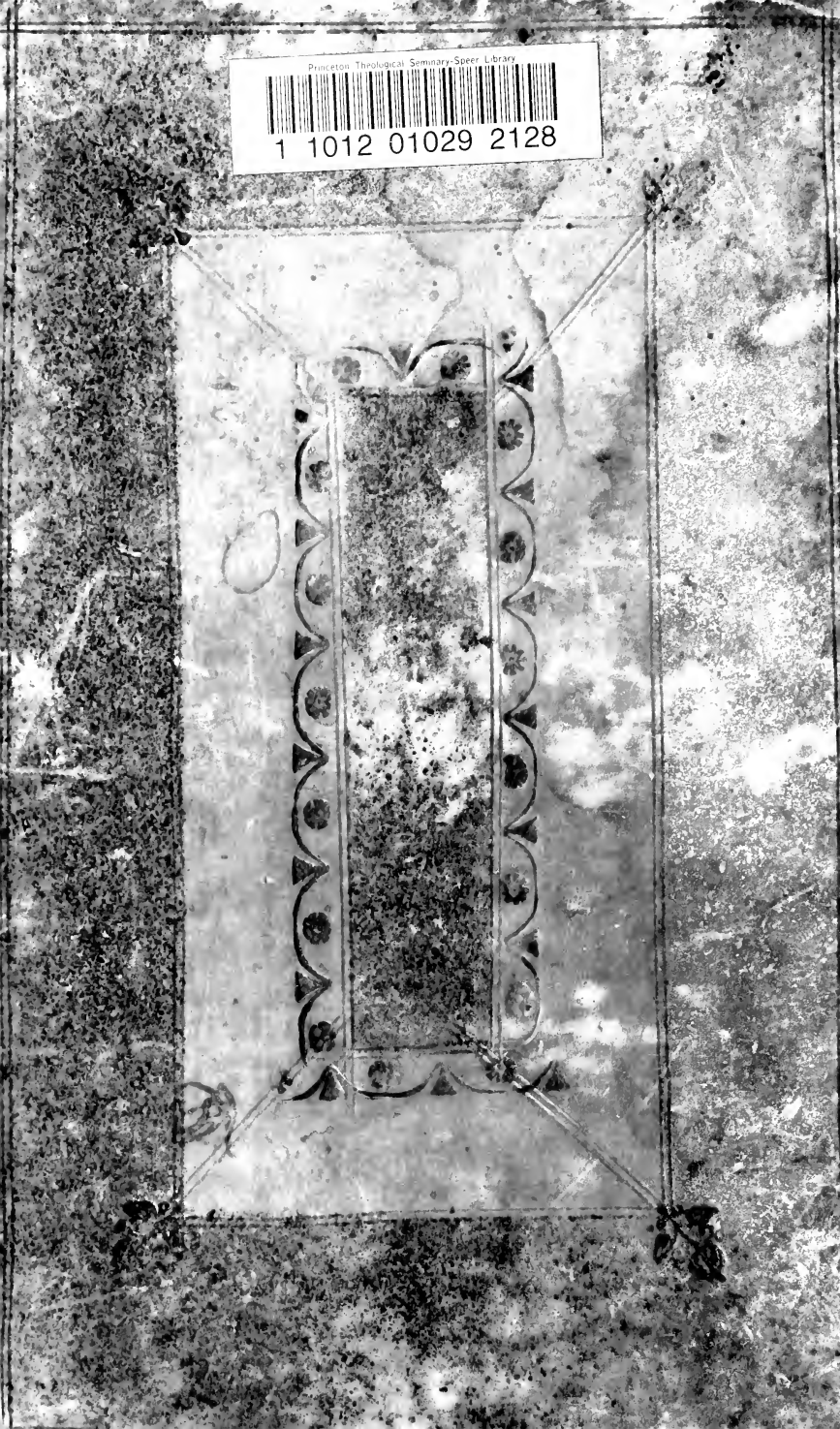
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